CLINTON & THE USUAL SUSPECTS – THE EDITORS

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Traditional Family Values . . .

BY ALBERT SHANKER, PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

When the Republicans began stressing "traditional family values" during the recent presidential campaign, they got a lot of flak. Nevertheless, they were on to something important.

Studies and statistics—and our own observations—tell us that American families are increasingly fragile and unstable, and we fear that, as a result, many children are being seriously damaged. In "Sources of Competence and Character: What Do Families Do?" (*Family Affairs*, Winter/Spring 1991), Urie Bronfenbrenner, a psychologist who teaches at Cornell University, says that the damage is more serious and far more widespread than we imagine. There has been an enormous increase in the scientific understanding of the role families play in children's intellectual and moral growth. And, Bronfenbrenner says, "the more we learn about the conditions [in family life] that undergird and foster the development of human competence and character, the more we see these same conditions being eroded and destroyed in contemporary societies."

We must think beyond the family unit to fix what is going wrong within it.

The drastic alteration in family life is not only an American phenomenon: Bronfenbrenner finds evidence of it in other industrial societies and even in developing nations. And its effects are not limited to the poor and disadvantaged. Middle class children whose parents lead hectic and stressful lives are also seriously at risk.

What are the conditions that are basic to a child's healthy intellectual and moral development? The most important is a special kind of long-term relationship with a person who is deeply attached to the child. Food, shelter and affection are important, but "in order to develop—intellectually, socially and morally," a child needs a loving adult with whom to participate in "progressively more complex reciprocal activities." This resembles the familiar idea of the parent as a child's first teacher, but to emphasize the give-and-take in the relationship, Bronfenbrenner compares it to a continuing "psychological Ping-Pong game between two people who are crazy about each other."

Bronfenbrenner does not believe this relationship can exist only between a mother and child. But it is relaxed, time-consuming and, ideally, extends over many years. So a child would be unlikely to get what he needs from a succession of caregivers or from a parent whose own life is chaotic and troubled. Nor is it the kind of relationship that can be developed and maintained by a busy parent who can spare only little bits of time from a crowded schedule.

Children who are deprived of this special relationship and the informal education that it involves are unlikely to do well in school unless there is some sort of intervention, which Bronfenbrenner points out, will be relatively expensive and relatively inefficient. And studies show that adverse effects on children who do not enjoy this relationship continue into adulthood. As adults, these deprived kids are less likely to function "responsively and creatively . . . in the realms of work, family life and citizenship."

Children from single family households are at a special disadvantage because achieving and maintaining this relationship also depends, in large measure, on there being a second adult "who assists, . . . gives status to, and expresses admiration for the person caring for and engaging in joint activity with the child." And the risk to children from single parent households is multiplied by poverty. Bronfenbrenner admits that strong support from other family members and friends can help, but he says that "in the family dance, 'it takes three to tango.'"

But according to Bronfenbrenner, even young children who live in two-parent families with educated and well-to-do parents can be developmentally at risk—if both parents work. Chances are, such parents have to commute and are on the run from morning to night, coordinating the "conflicting demands of job and child care." All this leads to what Bronfenbrenner characterizes as the "*increasing instability, inconsistency and hectic character of daily family life.*" And of course the growing number of divorces, remarriages and redivorces add to the instability and increase the likelihood that children will be deprived of the relationship that is basic to the development of their competence and character.

What are we to do? Pointing disapproving fingers at single parents or mothers who work would not be useful even if it were possible to turn back the clock. But the problem is already enormous, and it will only get worse if we do nothing about it.

Bronfenbrenner says that we must think beyond the family unit in order to fix what is going wrong within it. One of the chief sources of stress for working parents is conflict between work and family, and he talks about such things as flexible schedules and part-time jobs that don't require workers to sacrifice their benefits or opportunities for advancement. But Bronfenbrenner goes much further to suggest that we revise our public policies so they support childrearing instead of ignoring it.

If Bronfenbrenner is right, a lot of the problems that we associate with inner city families are being replicated in middle and upper class families, and we are producing a generation of young people who will not have the intellectual and moral foundation they need. But why should we settle for this? Though other countries face some of the same problems we do, they don't demand that people choose between their family responsibilities and their jobs the way we do. They have public policies that encourage and support families. We should too, and they need to be on our new national agenda.

MR. SHANKER'S COMMENTS APPEAR IN THIS AD UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS. READER CORRESPONDENCE IS INVITED. ADDRESS YOUR LETTERS TO MR. SHANKER AT THE AFT, 555 NEW JERSEY AVE., N.W., WASHINGTON, DC 20001. ©1992 BY ALBERT SHANKER.

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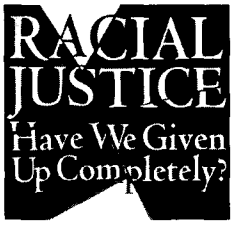

Cover by Eric Baker for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Articles on pages 15 and 17.

4 **CORRESPONDENCE** Defending Sinead O'Connor, Jim Baker's stinking fish, &c.

6 **MICHAEL KINSLEY** TRB: SPINACH, PLEASE The president-elect's first big test.

7 **THE EDITORS** UNUSUAL SUSPECTS Here's hoping the rest of Clinton's appointees have little in common with Vernon Jordan and Warren Christopher.

8 **NOTEBOOK** A (sniff) farewell to Bushisms, Russians on death row, &c.

9 **DOUGLAS COUPLAND** BIZ LIT 101 Books aren't just entertainment—they can be valuable business and management instruction tools. Glean ho!

10 **ANNA HUSARSKA** BUDAPEST POSTCARD: HIS KAMPF Hungary's neo-fascist party veep.

11 **SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL** RUBBERS Bush's place in history.

12 **JOHN J. MILLER** OPTING OUT Not all conservatives support school choice.

13 **HERBERT BURKHOLZ** KILLER GRAPES An FDA horror story.

15 **JEFF ROSEN** JURYMANDERING An argument against race-based jury selection.

17 **ANDREW KULL** RACIAL JUSTICE How race-balanced jury pools are turning a legitimate desire for fairness into a form of American judicial apartheid.

21 **NAT HENTOFF** PRO-CHOICE BIGOTS Intolerance on the abortion issue is not restricted to the pro-lifers. A view from the unorthodox left.

26 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ON FILMS: ENDING AND BEGINNING A Van Gogh's-eye view of the world in *Van Gogh.*

28 **ROBERT ALTER** ENEMIES, A LOVE STORY *If I Am Not for Myself...: The Liberal Betrayal of the Jews* by Ruth R. Wisse; *Land and Power* by Anita Shapira

32 **JOHN UPDIKE** POEM *Celery*

33 **JAMES HAMILTON-PATERSON** THE VOYAGE OUT *Imagining the Pacific: In the Wake of the Cook Voyages* by Bernard Smith; *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook* by Gananath Obeyesekere

38 **ERNEST GELLNER** INNOCENT ABROAD *The Future of Liberal Revolution* by Bruce Ackerman

39 **TIM PAGE** ROLL OVER LISZT *Horowitz: The Life and Music* by Harold C. Schonberg

43 **FRED BARNES** WASHINGTON DIARIST: O.K., YOU WIN

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CORRESPONDENCE

Waffle house

To the editors:

"The Character Thing" (November 2) was uncharacteristically obtuse. *Of course* Bill Clinton waffled. In the United States today—home of the superpatriotic and the politically correct—no rational, calm discussion of patriotism is possible.

Try a different scenario. On day one of the campaign Clinton stands up and says: "I was opposed to the war in Vietnam for all the moral, ethical, and personal reasons you can think of, and I did absolutely everything I could—within the law—to avoid the draft. Not only that, I participated in and helped organize protest demonstrations against the war on foreign soil, and even traveled to Moscow during my Christmas break from Oxford. Just thought y'all should know." Would the Republicans have replied: "Bully for Bill! He has leveled with the American people, and now the patriotism issue is behind us"? Get real. They would have jumped on him like a duck on a june bug, and he wouldn't have made it past New Hampshire.

Regarding Clinton waffles on the Gulf war and NAFTA, to trot out two more tiresome Republican charges: they are very complex issues into which George Bush led us with remarkably little candor, and about which any thoughtful person is of many minds. In their frenzy to remain in power, the Republicans have apparently lost the ability to distinguish between waffling and rethinking. So, it would seem, has TNR.

WILLIAM SCOBLE
Santa Ynez, California

To the editors:

As an independent voter who basically agrees with TNR's assessment of the problems facing our country and the steps that need to be taken to solve them, I was baffled by your enthusiastic endorsement of Bill Clinton for president.

By your own standards, Bush was the clear choice over Clinton on almost all economic issues. Neither Bush nor Clinton offered a serious deficit reduction plan, but Bush at least acknowledged the need to curb entitlement growth, a position Clinton attacked as a "secret plan" to cut Social Security and Medicare. What is Clinton's proposed tax on individuals making more than $200,000 if not more redistributional rhetoric? It certainly isn't a serious proposal to pay for the likely spending increases implied in his expansive investment program. Clinton's studied waffling on free trade gives a strong indication that he will cave in to a protectionist Congress at a time when our economy needs a strong free trade proponent in the White House. Your "wildest dream" that Clinton will offer a serious plan after "pandering his way to the White House" is just that, a dream.

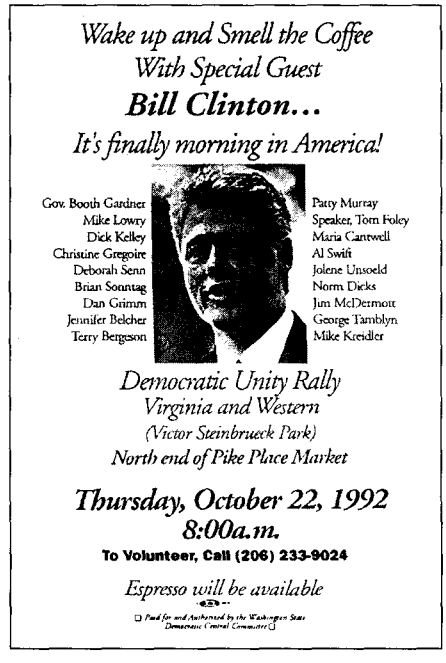
GREG HARPER
Alexandria, Virginia

Rewired

To the editors:

After reading "Wired" (by Robert E. Sullivan Jr., October 12), I thought this might interest you.

Only here, I believe, would a flier for a political rally have to state clearly that



"espresso will be available." God forbid we turn out for a speech by our next president without our mochas and lattes!

Bill Clinton was a hit, and so was the coffee—and I can confirm that we in the Northwest feel very good about having both around for a good long time.

TIM MCGILLIVRAY
Olympia, Washington

To the editors:

As a past two-year resident of Seattle, I too became hooked on the espresso, latte experience of the great Pacific Northwest. Although I agree with Robert E. Sullivan's premise that those living in the Washington, Oregon, and San Francisco areas are helplessly addicted to coffee products, Sullivan was wrong about the reason. *Clouds, rain, drizzle,* and only *sixty sunny days* a year truly make mankind thirst for that incredible rush of concentrated caffeine throughout the day. If you doubt this theory, check out how many people in Arizona or Florida drink these concoctions on a sunny 90-degree day.

CHARLES BRODY
Atlanta, Georgia

Rats

To the editors:

Former conservative supporters of Presidents Reagan and Bush who now discover hitherto undisclosed virtue in a Clinton administration ("Conservatives for Clinton," November 2) omit one compelling reason for their new pledge of allegiance: many conservative intellectuals, like most of their liberal cousins, prefer likely presidential winners to probable losers.

The capacity of Washington creatures to rationalize the personal advantages of access to power and privilege as a moral imperative should not be underestimated. A victorious Democratic administration whose policies they do not know is a more promising future Maecenas than a fading Republican White House whose policies, after twelve years of their support, are suddenly found to be sadly deficient.

DAVID HEAPS
Princeton, New Jersey

To the editors:

I don't know which is funnier: that you think John Frohnmayer is a conservative, or that he thinks he is a Republican.

MALCOLM PEARSON
Huntingdon, Tennessee

Et cum spiritu tuo

To the editors:

I was troubled by your Notebook item commenting upon Sinead O'Connor's tearing up the pope's picture and characterizing him as "the real enemy" on "Saturday Night Live" ("Pope on a Rope," October 26). TNR is usually the first to cry "foul" when, in response to legitimate critical free expression, representational groups such as the NAACP or NOW raise the specters of racism, sexism, and bias, thereby chilling the free exchange of serious thought. Now, however, in the face of an act censuring the institutional Church's—not Catholicism's—most recognizable symbol (the Eucharist and Crucifix were not defiled), you respond with the shrill charge of "anti-Catholic bigotry [from] the left."

O'Connor, an Irish Catholic, has grown up in a country where institutional Church dogmas can be seen as having at least some connection with political realities like civil war and the complete prohibition, regardless of the circumstances, of a woman's right to choose. Moreover, in recent years the institutional Church has

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reaffirmed its positions on important matters such as Third World family planning, recognition of the state of Israel, and the status of women within the Church, positions that have caused many Catholics, myself included, much anguish.

On the world stage, the institutional Church is no less a political actor than, for example, the fundamentalist religious right, home and abroad. Undoubtedly, you would defend public expressions of revulsion toward institutional symbols of the latter, be they the tearing up of a picture of Pat Robertson or the characterization of Iranian *mullahs* as "the real enemies." In light of this, your accusation of bigotry in this instance appears hypocritical.

Finally, given the fact that you devoted space to blasting O'Connor, you could at least make mention of the inappropriateness of SNL's host the following week, Joe Pesci, saying that if O'Connor had been on "his" show, he would have "slapped" her.

JOHN GREABE
Concord, New Hampshire

Fishy

To the editors:

In "I, Baker" (November 2), Sidney Blumenthal tells us that "at Princeton, even though he was married and had a child, [James] Baker pledged his father's fraternity and wore a stinking fish on a string for a week to prove himself to the old man." Alumni records indicate that James Baker was not married while at Princeton, and during his undergraduate days there were no fraternities at Princeton, only eating clubs. Students did not pledge these clubs but joined after "bickering," a process of selection that was discriminatory, often silly, and sometimes cruel, but that did not involve hazing of the kind Blumenthal suggests. Informal archives hold that undergraduates at Princeton were occasionally given to swallowing goldfish alive to impress their contemporaries, but even during Baker's time they would surely have been hooted out of their designated club (Baker's was the most exclusive, Ivy Club) and sent back home for wearing a stinking fish on a string during the course of an afternoon, let alone a week.

EDMUND KEELEY
Princeton, New Jersey

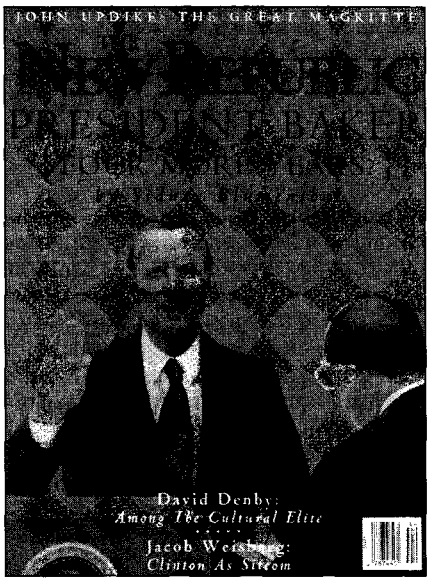
Seeing Red

To the editors:

John Judis ("The Red Menace," October 26) wants to do the right thing—balance the federal budget. Unfortunately, he wants to do it for the wrong reasons, and in the wrong way.

Judis argues that government borrowing causes high interest rates and that there is some undefined yet dangerous relationship between trade deficits and budget deficits. Neither hypothesis is supported by fact. No statistically significant relationship exists between interest rates and budget deficits. This does not mean that government borrowing has no impact on interest rates; it simply means, in world capital markets with trillions of dollars, that $50 billion or $100 billion changes in the U.S. budget deficit are not significant.

To solve the deficit problem, Judis adopts a bizarre form of pseudo-Keynesian economic theory to argue that balancing the budget by cutting spending "could prove disastrous" to the economy. Yet Judis is inconsistent. Tax increases



also are ill-advised according to Keynesian theory, yet he does not address this concern. Not that this should come as a surprise. Judis argues that the deficit is a crisis, yet says that spending cuts are unacceptable. Want to venture a guess as to what solution he has in mind?

Deficit spending does harm our economy, but not for the reasons Judis puts forth. The real problem is that deficit spending represents a transfer of resources from the private sector of the economy, which has strong incentives to use resources efficiently, to the government, whose politicians and bureaucrats respond to political incentives and almost always allocate resources in counterproductive ways.

But the deficit is only a symptom. The real problem is government spending, and raising taxes (thus replacing debt-financed spending with tax-financed spending) does not solve it. If government spending is controlled, the budget deficit will fall. This need not require draconian cuts. Simply capping the growth of domestic spending to the rate of inflation would lead to rapid deficit reductions.

Judis defines Herbert Hoover as a "conservative deficit-cutter" whose spending cut theories failed miserably. My history may be somewhat shaky, but the only Herbert Hoover I am familiar with increased spending by more than 50 percent in real terms, raised the top tax rate from 25 percent to 63 percent, and signed into law the most protectionist piece of legislation in American history. That may sound conservative compared with the policies Judis prefers, but rest assured that the Great Depression, like today's economic stagnation, was the result of flawed government policies.

DANIEL J. MITCHELL
Heritage Foundation
Washington, D.C.

Arguing with God

To the editors:

Contrary to Lillian Freudmann, my citation from Kedushin 1:1 is accurate (Correspondence, November 9). Freudmann's optimistic interpretation of the Mishna is anachronistic, an example of a current movement to read enlightened, contemporary values back into awkwardly anti-woman strictures within Jewish texts. While it is perfectly legitimate in a modern religious setting to apply Freudmann's more progressive (medieval) interpretation, it is wishful thinking to call that a scholarly analysis of second-century Rabbinic intentions.

As for Fred W. Andrea III, he cannot make his point—that "the Scriptural ideal is not unilateral gender submission but rather mutual submission under the Lordship of Christ"—if we follow the citation in question to its conclusion (italics mine):

> Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.
>
> Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands.
>
> Husbands, *love* your wives... [Ephesians 5:21-25]

More importantly, it is not "feminist Bible-bashing" to attack the patriarchal *use* of the Bible; in fact, feminist scrutiny is in keeping with one ancient, subversive strand of Jewish egalitarian exegesis. In the Jewish tradition, arguing with God is a form of worship; that should go for women too.

NAOMI WOLF
New York, New York

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FROM WASHINGTON

Spinach, please

As many have noted, President-elect Clinton faces two contradictory economic challenges. One is goosing a sluggish economy in the short term. The other is the federal deficit, which is sapping our long-term economic strength. Any short-term stimulus—a tax cut, a spending increase, or some combination—will increase the deficit, thus worsening the long-term problem. Which should he choose?

To a back-seat driver, the answer is obvious. Going for the short-term stimulus would be a mistake. In fact, it could very likely wreck Clinton's presidency. I count five reasons.

First, it may not be necessary. Scant days ago, before the election, Clinton was poo-pooing George Bush's claims that the economy is on the mend. Now he can afford to admit that Bush may well be right. Government stimulus efforts usually come too late in the business cycle to do much good. A stimulus that took effect next spring would probably be one more case study.

Second, in the new global economy, an artificial short-term stimulus may be self-defeating. The markets will greet any such effort by raising long-term interest rates, due to fear of rising deficits and future inflation. This will counteract any stimulus effect. In the month before the election, long-term rates went up almost half a point on the mere supposition that Clinton would win and then attempt a quick economic jolt.

(The flip side of this is that international markets will reward evidence of genuine commitment to deficit restraint with lower interest rates and renewed confidence in the American economy. That will have a stimulus effect of its own.)

Third, much of the present jobs agony is unrelated to the short-term state of the economy. Huge layoffs in corporate America are part of a historic restructuring that won't be derailed by a fiscal stimulus. Nor should it be derailed. Clinton's long-term plans for worker retraining and building new industries are the right answers for this one.

Fourth, Reagan and Bush destroyed fiscal stimulus as a useful economic medicine, at least for now, by overprescribing it. If the economy is sluggish with a $300 billion-plus deficit (and low, low short-term interest rates to boot), what will it take to stir the juices? $400 billion? $500 billion?

Fifth and most important, there's politics. If Clinton uses this excuse to evade the deficit problem early on, he'll never address it later. Let's face it: these two economic challenges are not politically equivalent. Fiscal stimulus is candy. Deficit reduction is spinach. At the beginning—with goodwill from citizens and Congress, and re-election four years away—President Clinton's power will be at its zenith. If he offers candy now, he won't be able to sell spinach later. And only by feeding us spinach soon is there any hope that the taste will be forgotten—and the benefits evident—in time for 1996.

What the Clintonites would like to do, probably, is to offer a candy/spinach package deal: an agreement in advance that a year or two of stimulus would be followed by serious deficit reduction. This is a fantasy. It would be the fourth time in less than a decade that America would have made a solemn commitment to start serious deficit reduction in a couple of years. No one will believe it.

Count 'em. In 1985 we had the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings law, providing for across-the-board spending cuts if deficit targets weren't met. When those targets became too onerous in the late 1980s, they were extended. In 1990, when even the extended deadlines finally would have started to bite into popular programs, we had the Budget Summit. That agreement put off tough love until after the 1992 election. And here we are. Yes it's unfair that George Bush should have left this time bomb for his successor. But he did lose the election. That should be some comfort.

Arguments that Clinton should ignore the deficit at least in the short term are coming not just from Keynesian liberals urging a quick infusion of federal spending on things like infrastructure. Since the election there also has been a steady drumbeat of conservative commentary demanding that Clinton prove his bona fides as a "new kind of Democrat" by quickly enacting tax favors for business such as an investment tax credit or capital gains tax cut.

Clinton got elected promising all these things in various forms, but he also promised to pay for them with compensating tax increases and/or spending cuts. Trouble is, any such "revenue-neutral" approach—giving with one hand, taking away with the other—would not provide a short-term jolt. And of course it would require selling the spinach along with the candy. That's why the Clintonites are already traveling down the wearily familiar road of claiming that various goodies will "pay for themselves," à la Ronald Reagan's famous supply-side tax cuts.

Remember the Laffer Curve? Well, please welcome the "Aschauer Curve," another economist's bid for immortality. It purports to show that public infrastructure investment—roads, bridges, etc.—generates enough new economic activity to replace, in remarkably short order, the tax revenues it costs. And some Clinton advisers reportedly are peddling a study by another economist making a similar claim for the proposed business investment tax credit: it will cost the government $11 billion over two years, but quickly earn that back and more, creating gazillions of jobs along the way.

It is hard to think of anything that would be more dispiriting than to see a newly installed President Clinton embrace the discredited politics of the free lunch. Clinton is stuck forever, no doubt, with the label "slick." But there are different ways for a politician to display, and use, slickness. One is to give people everything they want. Another is to convince people to want what you give them. That second kind of slickness can be a valid component of leadership.

During the campaign, Clinton was slick in suggesting that his various economic nostrums would solve the short-term recession problem, when they were really addressed to the long-term problem of slow national economic decline. But in doing so he did build a case for what are some of the right steps. Now he has called for some kind of grandiose economic powwow. If this is intended as a way to create a sense of emergency—"Oh my God, things are even worse than we thought!"—to justify abandoning deficit restraint ("just for now"), that's bad slickness. If it's a way of easing Clinton off his promise of short-term miracles, so we can proceed to address the long-term problem, that's good slickness.

The very night of his victory, November 3, Clinton reverted to rhetoric about shared sacrifice that hadn't been heard much from him since early in primary season. I thought this was a good sign. But he'll need all the slickness he's got to put that notion across.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

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NOVEMBER 30, 1992

UNUSUAL SUSPECTS

The appointment of Vernon Jordan and Warren Christopher to head the Clinton-Gore transition team is less a surprise than an anti-climax. They are highly competent, professional men, and their appointment suggests that the new administration will not engage in the shallower kind of anti-Washington posturing that characterized the last Democratic administration. The two men helped select Al Gore as the vice presidential candidate; and both have a shrewd grasp of the range of talent the president-elect has to draw on. But the symbolism of these two quintessential Washington insiders and members of the Democratic establishment is unfortunate. The entire tenor of the campaign showed how concerned the voters are about an entrenched Washington power structure. The votes on term limits, the substantial support for Ross Perot, and the growing numbers of independent voters who made the difference for Clinton-Gore all show how Bill Clinton should be leery of seeming to install an old and familiar array of traditional party appointees.

Clinton was not elected to head a second Carter administration. He didn't campaign, as he hinted even in his convention acceptance speech, as a partisan Democrat. He rightly portrayed himself as a candidate who understood Washington but was not of Washington. We hope that in their recommendations, Christopher and Jordan will keep this radicalism firmly in mind. They may be Old Democrats, but their candidate is, in his own words, a New Democrat. He should seek to construct as refreshing and as adventurous an administration as possible.

A large part of this is generational. Democrats in their 30s and 40s are less likely to be hard-wired to the old Democratic loyalties and palliatives than their elders. They are more likely to have cut their teeth in the wake of Great Society liberalism and to be less sentimentally attached to its mistakes; their approach to domestic policy is likely to be more pragmatic and innovative (like Clinton's); and their instincts in foreign policy less haunted by the rancor and specters of the cold war. They are readier to break with party orthodoxy when it matters and to be skeptical of its adherents. They are far more likely to strike a chord with the middle-class independent voters who now form a central part of the Clinton coalition.

There is no shortage of them. Clinton fought his highly effective campaign largely from their ranks, and he would do well to add to his transition team a key campaign official—say, George Stephanopoulos—to lend edge and youth to the Jordan-Christopher operation. Among the other, fresher talents that come to mind, whose expertise ranges from foreign policy to welfare reform, labor economics to public housing, are Mary Jo Bane, David Ellwood, Mike Espy, Vince Lane, Sarah Lightfoot, Elaine Kamarck, Daniel Yergin, Bruce Reed, and Atul Gawande on domestic policy, the three Roberts—Shapiro, Reich, and McIntyre—on economic and tax policy, and Jeffrey Sachs, Adrian Karatnycky, and Dave McCurdy on foreign policy and defense. Some of these are on many lists, some aren't. Some we know well (they have appeared in these pages); others we admire from a distance. They do not all share the same views, and many differ with us on some issues. And there are many, many others, of course, we haven't mentioned. Nevertheless, these people give a rough idea of the *kind* of administration Clinton should construct: younger, energetic, independent-minded, tough.

One view, of course, is that Clinton, lacking gravitas, should surround himself with the great and the good. We hope he doesn't; he is more likely to be engulfed by the corrupt and the tired. An administration full of Lloyd Bentsens and Bob Strausses would sink under the weight of its own putrescence. The voters sensed the exhaustion of the Democratic Congress in the campaign, and Clinton should keep it at arm's length. He should also stigmatize the Washington lobbyist-consultant axis. There is always an inertial tendency in transitions to let the capital's insiders take over; Clinton of all people should ensure that they don't. His anti-lobbying structures are a great start, but he should follow through by picking people like him. He needs to forgo the false wisdom of balance for the benefits of amplification. The strategy worked brilliantly with the vice presidency. It will work just as well with the rest. •

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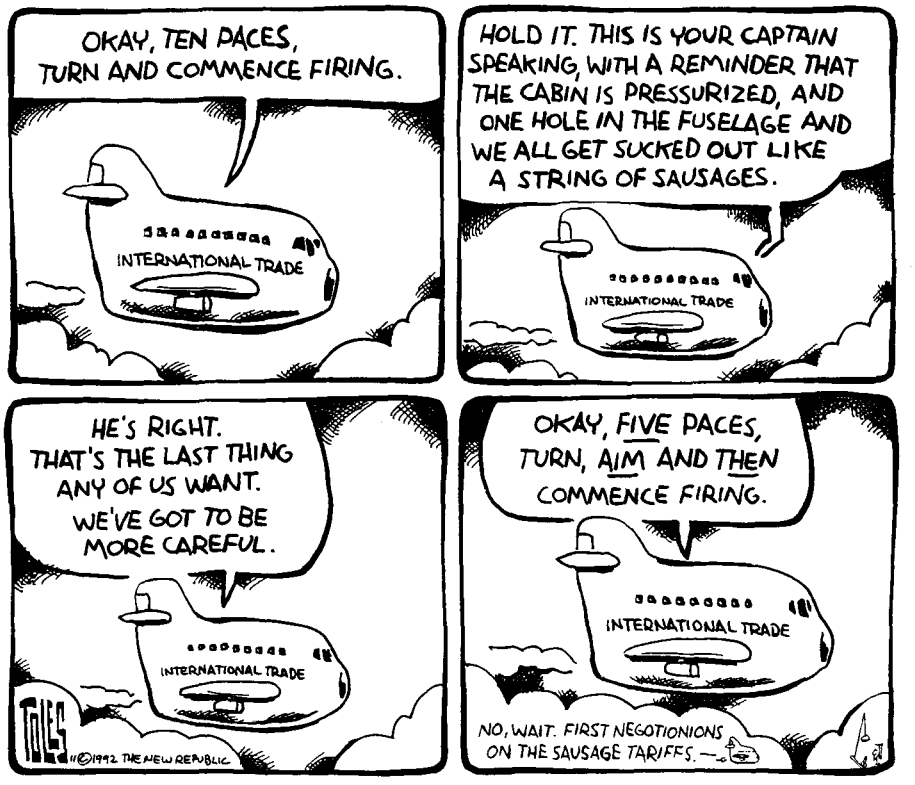
NOTEBOOK

BUSHISMS FAREWELL: George Bush's rambling days have, alas, come to an end. With the pressure of the election lifted, he has confined his public statements in recent days to a few pro forma, largely grammatical prepared remarks. Thus it seems appropriate to conclude the feature that has graced this space for the past thirteen months. We extend our thanks to President Bush for his utterances of the last several years, and wish him great coherence in private life.

VOLCKER TIME: Since it's pretty clear Bill Clinton isn't going to make the deficit his top priority in the next four years, the next best thing would be to appoint Paul Volcker as treasury secretary. Sure, he's not a bright, young thing (for those, see our lead editorial), but in some departments—and especially the Treasury for a bankrupt country—that's an advantage. Volcker's appointment would be a plausible promise to address the deficit in the future. The question (put most cynically) is how best to milk his credibility for maximum economic gain. The appointment has to be made in just the right way, with Volcker and Clinton making it clear that Volcker has accepted the job only after long conversations from which the big guy has concluded that Clinton is committed to a long-term deficit reduction plan. With Volcker we would get the bonus of his past dealings with foreign financial bigwigs. The Germans and the Japanese (our creditors) especially like him. He's also spent some of his career at Treasury, so he doesn't need to be shown the way to the men's room.


OKAY, TEN PACES, TURN AND COMMENCE FIRING.
INTERNATIONAL TRADE
HOLD IT. THIS IS YOUR CAPTAIN SPEAKING, WITH A REMINDER THAT THE CABIN IS PRESSURIZED, AND ONE HOLE IN THE FUSELAGE AND WE ALL GET SUCKED OUT LIKE A STRING OF SAUSAGES.
INTERNATIONAL TRADE
HE'S RIGHT. THAT'S THE LAST THING ANY OF US WANT. WE'VE GOT TO BE MORE CAREFUL.
INTERNATIONAL TRADE
TOLES ©1992 THE NEW REPUBLIC
OKAY, FIVE PACES, TURN, AIM AND THEN COMMENCE FIRING.
INTERNATIONAL TRADE
NO, WAIT. FIRST NEGOTIONIONS ON THE SAUSAGE TARIFFS.

RATHER GOOFY: We're tempted to replace Bushisms with the Dan Ratherism of the week. On election night, CBS's bizarre and often baffling anchorman was in rare form. A few samples:

"It will be so exciting as to make the wax pop out of your ears."

"There's material here that will make their fingernails sweat."

"Texas . . . another of the so-called big enchiladas, or if not an enchilada, at least a huge taco."

"The Clinton-Gore campaign was as unstoppable as, say, a Beethoven symphony."

"This woman has gotten a very bad rap, Hillary Clinton. It is true that she's smart. She didn't go to school just to eat her lunch."

RUSSIAN GLADIATORS: Not every Russian prisoner granted a stay of execution is as lucky as Dostoyevsky was. In October the Russian weekly *Argumenti i Fakty* reported that some on death row have been employed by the military as "objects for training in hand-to-hand combat." V. Suvorov, a former intelligence officer in the Soviet Armed Forces, explains the use of the prisoners, who are called "dolls": "When you are engaged in training combat against your comrade, you know in advance that he will not kill you. And he knows that you will not kill him. This takes the edge out of the combat. A 'doll,' however, can kill you; on the other hand, you are not going to be reprimanded if you break the doll's ribs or neck. Good for us, good for him. We can practice combat techniques without being afraid of crippling the opponent, while he gets a reprieve from death." But Suvorov also reports that under the new regime the dolls may be going out of style: "In the past, there were enough dolls for everybody. Now there is a shortage."

ASLIM PLURALITY: Thank heaven we have experts to explain things to us. Hodding Carter, State Department spokesman under Jimmy Carter, had this useful observation about the all-Southern Clinton-Gore administration: "The thing about the South is that it's finally multiple rather than singular in almost every respect. You've got to say about eight different things about each subject to say what it is, whereas before you could always say just a couple." Clear now? •

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Biz Lit 101

As freshmen across North America dump liberal arts for more pragmatic business courses, literature faculties fight back with a new approach ...

LITERARY WORK & AUTHOR	PLOT	BUSINESS LESSON
Heart of Darkness Joseph Conrad	Civilized and primitive cultures clash on primitive culture's turf. Primitive culture wins.	Younger, hungrier, less-calcified staff may resort to unusual self-advancement techniques.
Madame Bovary Gustave Flaubert	Bored wife Emma empties the family coffers to fund trips to Rouen for romantic dalliances.	Business travel by employees is necessary but requires judicious monitoring.
The Grapes of Wrath John Steinbeck	Displaced Oklahoma dirt farmers enter the non-lucrative mid-1930s California citrus industry.	Hungry workers are unstable workers. Is your employee cafeteria up to snuff?
Lord of the Flies William Golding	In the absence of order, the majority of schoolboys stranded on an island revert to animal behavior.	Keep employees busy at all times.
Vanity Fair William Thackeray	Class and money roller-coastering in early nineteenth-century London. Many characters marry for security.	Cause for reflection on the minimum-wage issue. Guaranteed incomes can prevent countless flawed life and career decisions.
Wuthering Heights Emily Brontë	Heathcliff, angered by certain events, exacts revenge from tenants, friends, and relatives via cruelty and mind games. Becomes a ghost in the end.	If you have a complaint with a staff member, healthy discussion rather than scheming is the way to promote positive change.
Sons and Lovers D. H. Lawrence	A mother's ambitions for her two sons warps their development. First son dies; the second is very messed up.	Don't overburden employees with unrealistic goals.
Pygmalion George Bernard Shaw	Professor Higgins alters the wardrobe and social skills of Cockney flower merchandiser Eliza Doolittle, ensuring her social and career success.	A skilled image consult is a crucial link to the career chain of any ambitious executive.
The Sun Also Rises Ernest Hemingway	The complicated love lives of American expatriates in 1920s Paris; many lovely travelogue descriptions of Spain.	Trips abroad make ideal employee bonus incentives. Is your company hooked up with a frequent flyer program?
Steppenwolf Hermann Hesse	Hary Haller's notebook showcases the schism between bourgeois and rebellious tastes. Much talk of music.	Gentle tunes in the workplace can ease job dissatisfaction and increase productivity.
One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest Ken Kesey	Metaphorical battle between Big Nurse (Authority) and an asylum inmate (the individual). Authority wins.	Employee sedation: scourge or bonanza?
I Robot Isaac Asimov	Often whimsical speculation on the role robots can play in our physical and emotional lives.	Machines are only as good as the stupidest person who works with them.
Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? Edward Albee	An extended air-clearing between spouses George and Martha reveals the sham and drudgery of their lives.	As a manager, it is your role to temper interemployee squabbles judiciously.
Surfacing Margaret Atwood	Metaphor-rich exploration of female and Canadian national autonomy and identity.	Free trade may bring your firm unexpected bonuses.
The Andy Warhol Diaries Andy Warhol, edited by Pat Hackett	A fun-packed decade of drugs, sex, fame, painting, and Concorde-lag. Includes classic Bianca's panties-sniffing scene.	It's only good art if it's good business.
The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin Beatrix Potter	Brash Nutkin cheeks-off sage Old Brown Owl once too often; tail is cut off.	Highlights the need for a mentor in today's rough-and-tumble corporate world.
Actually (Sheet music) Pet Shop Boys	Catchy lyrics and danceable techno-music by avant-garde British Europopstrels.	Identifying with youthful employees is one way of developing healthy management relations.
Rice Krispies (box) The Kellogg Cereal Company of Battle Creek, Michigan	Elfin funsters Snap, Crackle, and Pop dance about the rim of a cereal bowl. Bonus recipe for Rice Krispie Treats.	An executive must truly *like* the product or services the company produces before he or she can become 100 percent effective.

Douglas Coupland

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BUDAPEST POSTCARD

His Kampf

By Anna Husarska

October 23, the anniversary of the 1956 uprising in Budapest, is now a national holiday here. This year the Hungarian president, Árpád Göncz, was supposed to deliver the keynote address at Kossuth Square in front of the Parliament. He didn't. Impeded by catcalls and whistles from the crowd, Göncz stood at the podium for several minutes with a sad face, then stepped back and left the square. Those who disrupted the commemorations—young people carrying symbols of the Arrow Cross, Hungary's 1940s-era fascist group, and in S.S.-style trappings, known here as skinheads—as well as several hundred border guards and police cadets in plainclothes then called for an address from a certain István Csurka, who was not at hand.

Taken in isolation, this incident is no more alarming than any other outbreak of Ur-nationalism in Eastern Europe. But the combination of 11 percent unemployment, 23 percent inflation, disillusionment with the pace of change, and the emergence of a noisy extreme right has produced a particularly volatile situation in newly democratic Hungary. Csurka, the hero of the Hungarian skinheads, is not a fringe figure like Lyndon Larouche in the United States, or the leader of a minority like Jean-Marie Le Pen in France. He is vice president of the ruling Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF). As the Hungarians say, "You can neither swallow him, nor spit him out."

What is perhaps most disquieting about Csurka is the non-reaction from the mainstream politicians in his own party. Prime Minister József Antall, a member of the MDF, said he was "sorry" for the "regrettable" incident on October 23. Nobody had expected a more pungent answer. On August 20 Csurka published a rabid manifesto in the weekly *Magyar Forum*. In response Antall said mildly that some of Csurka's comments were "politically harmful and incorrect."

The text in question, *A Few Thoughts in Conjunction with the Two Years Since the System Change and with the New MDF Program*, should be required reading for any student of the ghosts of nationalism in Eastern Europe. This 20,000-word article offers a few classic themes. There is a conspiracy theory, according to which *The New York Times* and the Hungarian democratic opposition cooperated with the former nomenklatura banking connections and the U.S. consulate through secret channels, while "the International Monetary Fund stands behind the financial elite" like "the Red occupation army stood behind Communist henchmen, murderers."

"History needs a revision" is another old idea and a potentially catchy subject, since everyone here remembers the 1920 Trianon Peace Treaty, under which Hungary lost two-thirds of its territory and the population dropped from 18.2 million to 7.6 million, leaving 3.3 million Hungarians outside Hungary's borders. (When Antall refers to himself as "prime minister of 15 million Hungarians," he includes the 5 million living abroad.) "The [1945] Yalta agreement is going to expire in 1995," Csurka mysteriously claims, and worries if "the new Hungarian generation can live with the new possibilities of creating a Hungarian living space." (The Hungarian word is *eletteretteremto lehetosegekkel*; the German is *Lebensraum*.)

According to Csurka, former Communists "and members of the democratic opposition who maintained close contacts with them felt the hegemonic position [of the Hungarian Jewry] was threatened when the MDF was founded." But not to worry. The MDF is "distinguished from all other political forces by its placing of the vital issues of the Hungarian people above everything else." What is needed is a strong hand, because "order must be established without delay at Hungarian Radio and Hungarian Television and [for that] ... the use of any force should be permitted."

My favorite of sorts is the following paragraph, which would make even Patrick Buchanan blanch:

> We must put an end to the sickly practice according to which we blame the skinheads—part of our youth—for every evil.... We can no longer ignore the fact that the deterioration [of the population] has genetic causes as well. It must be acknowledged that underprivileged, even cumulatively underprivileged, strata and groups, in which the harsh laws of natural selection no longer function because it would do no good anyway, have been living among us for far too long. Society now has to support the strong, fit-for-life families who are prepared for work and achievement.

Having carefully studied the manifesto, I had a morbid curiosity to meet the author. After spending two days unsuccessfully trying to arrange an interview, I finally showed up in his little office in the Parliament. Caught off guard, Csurka agreed to five minutes and then spoke for half an hour. He looks like he sounds: low hairline, swollen face, huge torso, too short trousers, shirt opening on the stomach in a parenthesis between buttons, and right hand resting leisurely on the groin. Of course, only Hungarian spoken here. A young woman from the opposition party FIDESZ agreed to serve as my translator. I did not learn a great deal, only that for Csurka, Robert Maxwell was also in the Judeo-Communist conspiracy, "as became evident when he was buried in Jerusalem"; that Csurka does not consider himself an anti-Semite; and that he is convinced that 70 percent to 80 percent of MDF members support him and his ideas.

I talked to three leaders of the opposition, Eva Karadi, G. M. Tamás, and György Konrád, who shared their concerns about Csurka. Miklós Haraszti, a writer

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and Parliament deputy, who is equally worried, gave me four reasons for the Csurka phenomenon. First, the man himself, who now has made public ideas that he has always cherished. Second, the ill-composed MDF, where Christian-Democrat, national-liberal, and *völkisch* (populist) tendencies co-exist in an untenable marriage ("Can you imagine Chirac in the same party with Le Pen?"). Third, Hungarian democracy, also based on a set of uneasy compromises between irreconcilable partners. (The MDF rules with the Smallholders' Party and the Christian Democrats without the constitutionally required 66 percent of the vote; the opposition chooses the president and has the right to approve or oppose those nominated to head Hungarian radio and T.V.) Finally, there is the unpopularity of the MDF. Today it would carry around 10 percent of the votes, and Antall does not dare distance himself from Csurka because his own rating is only about 30 percent. (Göncz has 80 percent, and the most popular party is FIDESZ.)

I spoke with Haraszti just outside the conference hall where the culture commission of the Parliament was discussing the new media law. Miklós is a witty and charming grown-up boy. He was sitting, with one leg bent beneath him, in an armchair from which he could spot his colleagues from the Free Democrats (SZDSZ) or FIDESZ in the hall. Every now and then they scolded him for lack of discipline or energetically waved him in to vote. I waited outside between votes, reading Csurka's manifesto, and came across a description of the opposition: "The hard core of the SZDSZ, regardless of the Bolshevik centralizing iron discipline with which those people work ..." I pointed it out to Miklós. "See, this man has no idea what he is speaking about," he smiled, but there was no amusement in his eyes, only sadness. •

Bush's place in history.

RUBBERS

By Sidney Blumenthal

Nothing became George Bush so much as his defeat mode. All the tinfoil and wire contrivances of the campaign were disposed of so swiftly that one could feel his relief. Politics had always been an unpleasant necessity, enabling him to perform public service, which was its own justification. Bush dimly remained a silk-stocking mugwump, who could not disentangle his notion of integrity from his notion of deference. The instant his cries of "bozos" and "Ozone" faded, he restored himself to a stoic posture, as Republicans raged. "There must be no finger-pointing," said Bush. "I captained the team and I take full responsibility for the loss." Once again he was the Yale baseball captain, the genteel sportsman. He had no instinct for politics, but he could fall back on manners.

By his own self-comparison he was more than that. Winston Churchill, too, Bush remarked, had been defeated: "He said, 'I have been given the order of the boot.' And that is the exact position in which I find myself today." During the Gulf war, Churchill was among the president's totems. Even Bush's grandiloquence—"the defining hour"—was indebted to Churchill. But Churchill was simply one of many ill-fitting personas that Bush donned. These personas came and went, the fashions of Bush's seasons. Ultimately, they curled around the edges, and Bush was left scrambling for another covering. His search for an appropriate model was the shadow of his search for a suitable politics, which constantly eluded him.

It is only now that Bush has achieved the position he has been striving for: the former presidency. He need not hire any mud-spattered denizens from the lower orders—an Atwater, an Ailes—to do the dirty work. Bush no longer has to abase himself before the right wing that he despises and that even more fiercely despises him. Nor does he have to bend himself into contorted shapes to appear as a daring agent of change. The irreducible Bush is the trustee of the estate, which is how he has understood the executive office all along.

Initially, Bush presented himself as Ronald Reagan redux—only kinder and gentler. Upon winning election as Reagan's residue, the new president attempted to establish his separate identity by stressing that he was, unlike his predecessor, a sentient being. But Reagan had an endlessly repetitive loop of film about the country running in his head, his vision thing. There was little evidence that Bush had any similar implanted device, despite occasional belabored references to Norman Rockwell (and Arnold Schwarzenegger). Bush rented Peggy Noonan's memories of a middle-class childhood and wore them like a tuxedo to festive events.

"I'm an Oyster Bay kind of guy," he proclaimed early in his presidency. In those days Bush liked to see himself as Teddy Roosevelt, the Rough Rider, but in fact he was the rightful heir of the Republican Party that Roosevelt ran against as a Bull Moose in 1912, railing against "the party of privilege" and those of "narrow mind, who believe we can find safety in dull timidity and dull inaction." After the Gulf war, in May 1991, Bush briefly found inspiration in Andrew Jackson, the popular military hero and president. But this was as rapidly forgotten as the postwar afterglow, and in his bid for a come-from-behind win, Bush zipped on a Truman identity that had no relationship to Truman's content—a set of social policies so liberal that they have not yet been enacted today.

With his loss, Bush's icons slipped away from him. Now he must be compared to other former presidents

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and would-be presidents whose names he has never raised: Taft, Hoover, Dewey. Bush, like William Howard Taft, the last member of Skull and Bones to hold the presidency, was an understudy to a charismatic predecessor—a classic failed third-termer. His conservatism was thoroughgoing and deliberate. "I'll have no part to play but that of a conservative, and that I am going to play," said Taft. Yet the comparison slights Taft. He did not avidly pant after the White House, and it did not surprise his contemporaries that he went on to become chief justice of the Supreme Court, the position he had wanted after all.

Bush's electoral showing in 1992 was not as poor as Taft's, which was third after Wilson and Roosevelt, but it was worse than Herbert Hoover's. "I think it's unfair to both men," protests Richard Norton Smith, the director of the Hoover Library in West Branch, Iowa, about comparing the two presidents. "Bush," he continues, "wasn't anyone. I've always wondered if he was paralyzed by pretending to be what he wasn't." Bush was perhaps like Hoover in the riches-to-rags story of his presidency. Hoover, however, was the leading man of the 1920s: the engineer as self-made millionaire, masterful organizer of Belgian and Russian relief, a genuine scholar and chief ideologue of the "New Era," laying the groundwork not only for his Republican era but Reagan's as well. After his defeat, he wrote not merely his memoirs but a sympathetic biography of Woodrow Wilson, another tragic president.

Bush must also carry the disappointment of his first mentor, the great friend of his father's, the Republican who rebuilt the party after Hoover, defeated the forces of Taft's rear-guard son, and rammed through the nomination of Eisenhower—Thomas Dewey. Dewey had enormous hopes for Prescott's boy, even envisaging him as his ultimate legatee. But though Dewey was a Wall Street lawyer, he had come from a small town in Michigan. He made his power; he didn't inherit it. What Dewey could do for Ike could not be maintained for young George. "Modern Republicanism," the world of the fathers, with all its implied points of reference, was vanished.

Bush's vaunted foreign policy "realism" was really an ex post facto rationale for his often myopic expediency. The "new world order," if there ever was one, lies in ruins. What cause, then, is left to him? In his whole career, there was only one issue that he ever took up with authentic fervor and altruism. As a congressman, he was so intent in pressing the case for population control that Wilbur Mills, the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, dubbed him "Rubbers." The cause had been passed on to him by his father, who had been a stalwart member of Planned Parenthood. Yet, in 1980, as we recall, Bush gave up his one deeply felt conviction in order to remake himself into the image of Reagan's running mate. Those who rummage through the attic of Bush's past may someday come across this Rosebud of his lost identity, more telling than any of his favored presidential icons: *Rubbers.* •

Conservatives against choice.

OPTING OUT

By John J. Miller

Throughout the campaign, President Bush argued hard for school choice. "You can't [improve education] with the school bureaucracy controlling everything, and that's why we have a new program," he said during the second debate. "It says, let's give parents the choice of a ... public, private, or religious school." In campaign speeches, Bush mocked Bill Clinton for opposing his $500 million "G.I. Bill for Children," which would provide public or private school tuition vouchers of $1,000 for kids from low- or middle-income families in certain communities. "We're not going to do it by trickle-down government, having Governor Clinton tell us how to run our schools all across this country," he said in North Carolina.

In the past, school choice—like capital gains tax breaks and prayer in school—was an easy applause-getter among Republican crowds. But if Bush thought touting choice this year would win him universal praise from the right, he was wrong. Recently, many prominent conservatives have begun to sour on the idea. Patrick Buchanan, Charles Murray, and even the Heritage Foundation have all become increasingly skeptical of school choice.

This isn't to say that conservative education wonks are suddenly joining the NEA and the American Federation of Teachers in opposing the program. The standard liberal argument against school vouchers is that they would siphon money from already underfunded public schools and deposit it into private schools. The result: well-off kids in the suburbs would enroll in good private schools, while poor kids whose parents couldn't afford private schools even with the help of vouchers would be stuck in run-down city schools. The conservative dissenters, however, have turned the liberal argument on its head. They oppose choice not because it would boost private schools at the expense of public ones, but because it could make private schools more like public ones. "What we're looking at is the deprivatization of private schools," warns Llewellyn H. Rockwell Jr., president of the Alabama-based Ludwig von Mises Institute.

The fear is that once federal voucher funds started flowing into private schools, the government would have a foot in the door. Before long, private schools would be buried in the kind of education regulations that they say suffocated the public schools in the first place: teacher certification, curriculum content requirements, government-dictated admission standards, prayer bans, condom awareness programs. "I used to think school

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choice was a great idea, and I still support the concept," says Murray. "But I'm beginning to wonder whether voucher programs would invite the kinds of regulations that have crippled our public schools."

The speculation about government intrusion is probably justified. According to Chester Finn Jr., former assistant secretary of education under Reagan and an early school choice advocate, "There's no doubt in my mind that there will be some new regulations with voucher plans." Statements like that make libertarians, such as the Cato Institute's David Boaz, cringe. Boaz believes a federally financed plan would be disastrous. "I don't even think there should be a Department of Education," he says. "The more centralization, the worse the regulation." Boaz's stand may be a little extreme even for his fellow skeptics. But not by much. A recent Heritage Foundation press release warned that the school choice program "has the potential to backfire. It could easily lead to onerous regulation of private schools."

As an example of the havoc they believe choice vouchers would wreak in secondary schools, worried conservatives point to Hillsdale College, a small liberal arts school in Michigan, some of whose students once accepted government loans. Hillsdale began admitting women and blacks in the mid-nineteenth century, but in 1975, when the government imposed what Hillsdale considered to be overly intrusive affirmative action guidelines, the school refused to comply. A decade later the courts forced Hillsdale to trade its public aid for autonomy; today its students cannot receive any kind of government assistance. If Hillsdale must go to such great lengths to protect its independence, the conservatives say, then how can private grade schools expect to remain free from government meddling?

Another troubling example for conservatives comes from Nebraska. In 1981 the fundamentalist Faith Baptist Church school in Louisville refused to follow the local board of education's private school regulations, which required state certification of teachers, mandated that certain courses be taught, dictated the length of the school day and year, and required that licensing applications be filed regularly with the state. In a now widely recognized precedent, the state Supreme Court demanded that the school obey the school board rules, rebuking its refusal as "an arbitrary and unreasonable attempt to thwart the legitimate, reasonable, and compelling interests of the state in carrying out its educational obligations, under a claim of religious freedom."

In order to circumvent such interference, conservatives in California have been working to put a private school choice initiative on the ballot. If passed, government regulations could be enacted only with the approval of three-quarters of the state's legislators, or a two-thirds vote of a local governing body followed by a majority vote of the state's registered voters. One of the initiative's biggest boosters is free market economist Milton Friedman. Former Education Secretary William Bennett is also a supporter. "It's definitely the right way to go," he says. The initiative is scheduled to appear in June 1994.

By then, however, federal school choice programs may be a dead issue. Clinton opposes private school choice, and a Democratic Congress isn't likely to force it on him. Even among congressional Republicans support for the measure is spotty. The House Education and Labor Committee includes a number of Republicans—ranking member Bill Goodling of Pennsylvania, Susan Molinari of New York, and Marge Roukema of New Jersey—who firmly oppose choice for the same reason liberals do. In August the House considered an amendment sponsored by Republican Richard Armey of Texas that earmarked $175 million for private school choice. Only eighty of 166 Republicans voted in favor of it. And when the Senate voted last January on an amendment sponsored by Orrin Hatch that would have provided $30 million for voucher demonstration projects, six Republicans defected to the Democratic majority. Even if Bush had won a second term, his own party might have seen to it that his G.I. Bill for Children never reached adolescence. •

An FDA horror story.

KILLER GRAPES

By Herbert Burkholz

The killer grapes are back again, the same two cyanide-tainted grapes that terrorized American consumers three years ago, swept tons of fruit off supermarket shelves, and severely damaged the Chilean economy. First perceived as an averted tragedy and then as an overreaction by the Food and Drug Administration, it now appears that the Chilean Grape Scare of 1989 was a farce. Chilean fruit growers have filed a lawsuit against the U.S. government to recover more than $330 million in damages caused by the FDA's eleven-day embargo of the grapes. The growers claim that the suspect grapes were most likely contaminated not by terrorists in Chile, as the FDA first implied, but by the FDA itself.

Both sides agree on the beginning of the story. On March 2, 1989, an anonymous caller to the U.S. Embassy in Santiago warned that fruit headed for the United States had been injected with cyanide as an act of protest against the Pinochet regime. The call was repeated on March 8. Three days later FDA inspector William Fidurski spotted three suspicious-looking grapes on the docks at Philadelphia, in a shipment that had just arrived from Chile. Two of the grapes had puncture marks surrounded by concentric white rings; the third grape was slashed.

The fruit was rushed to the FDA's Philadelphia laboratory, where the two punctured grapes were tested and found to contain cyanide. Not much, not even enough to make a small child feel ill. But then-FDA Commis-

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sioner Frank Young decided that it was "better to be safe than sorry," as he repeatedly put it, and the mass fruit dumping began. The FDA impounded 2 million crates at airports and docks across the country and warned consumers not to eat any fruit from Chile, which included most of the peaches, blueberries, blackberries, melons, green apples, pears, and plums that were on the market at the time. In Oregon a distraught mother sent a police car on a high-speed chase after a school bus when she suddenly remembered that she had packed some grapes in her daughter's lunch box. Japan and Canada quickly removed Chilean fruit from the market. Before the crisis ended eleven days later, some 20,000 Chilean food workers had lost their jobs.

Given those facts, it would seem that, at the worst, the FDA had erred on the side of extreme caution. In their lawsuit, however, the Chileans claim there is more to the story. At the Philadelphia laboratory, the two punctured grapes tested positive for cyanide. But while the chemists there were congratulating each other on their discovery, part of the grape sample, along with the other grapes taken from the pallet and the other packing material that had accompanied the grapes, was sent to the FDA laboratory in Cincinnati for additional tests by Dr. Fred Fricke, an FDA specialist in cyanide contaminations. Cyanide is migratory. If the two suspected grapes had been injected with cyanide, the surrounding grapes in the bunch and the box itself would likely show traces of the poison. Fricke found nothing. Using the same tests as did the chemists in Philadelphia, he found not a trace of cyanide contamination in the grapes or on anything else.

The obvious next step was to retest the Philadelphia sample. But, as the Chileans reveal in their suit, the Philadelphia sample had been destroyed. In violation of both the Code of Federal Regulations and the FDA Regulatory Procedures Manual, which require that part of any original sample be set aside for just such a situation, the Philadelphia lab had used sodium hydroxide to neutralize the grape sample, instead of liquid nitrogen. Sodium hydroxide rendered the sample useless for further tests.

It was now 3:30 a.m. on March 13. The fruit was still sitting on the dock. Young had to decide whether to accept the docked fruit or reject it, and whether or not to embargo all Chilean fruit. Based on the information Young had, the decision should have been easy. Depending on which test he believed, the grapes were found to have either no cyanide at all or not enough even to upset the stomach of a child. What's more, well before the discovery of the suspect grapes, Young's experts had told him that it would be impossible to poison a Chilean grape by injecting it with cyanide. They knew, because they had tried it. Noting that the anonymous caller had specifically said the fruit would be "injected" with cyanide, the FDA had attempted to poison some grapes of their own, according to documents filed with the court. Lab studies had shown that the internal pressure of the fruit pulp in grapes would force virtually all of the cyanide injected back out onto the surface of the grape. This would turn the grape black, hardly an effective poisoning technique. In fact, FDA scientists had told Young that any grape poisoned in Chile would have turned black and wrinkled during the thirteen-day sea voyage from Chile to the United States.

Young also knew that the box containing the suspect grapes had been loaded aboard the *Almaria Star* in a position that was inaccessible during the entire voyage. If the grapes had not been poisoned in Chile, and could not have been reached aboard ship, then they had to have been contaminated in Philadelphia while under FDA control.

And there was another fact that Young knew, should have known, or should have been told. The grapes had been exposed to cyanide in the agency's Philadelphia lab. Cyanide is used in poison tests to calibrate the testing instruments. It is also used to "spike" the sample being tested—introducing a known quantity of cyanide into the sample to guard against false negative results. This was the procedure used that day in Philadelphia, which meant that the grapes most probably had been contaminated right there in the lab.

However, in spite of the overwhelming evidence that the fruit posed no danger, the FDA announced the embargo the next day. Young appeared on national television, urging consumers to throw away the fruit they had on hand and instructing grocers to pull it from their shelves. "We urge people not to consume the fruit they have if they are not sure of its origin," he said.

Young said nothing about the possibility that the tests were in error. Nor did he mention that no lethal or even harmful amounts of cyanide had been found. The public was told only that the grapes were poisoned and that a clear danger existed.

Why did the FDA instigate what was essentially a scare campaign? The agency declined to be interviewed for this story, since the case is in litigation. But the answer may be relatively simple: the FDA panicked.

The Chilean fruit scare came in the wake of the many other food and drug tampering incidents that the FDA faced during the '80s. In 1982 it was Tylenol capsules laced with cyanide. In 1984 it was fragments of glass in Gerber fruit juice products. Gerber was hit again in 1986, as were Tylenol and Excedrin. There were dozens of other threats that never made major headlines. Some were hoaxes, some the results of faulty production (the tiny bits of Gerber glass were part of the bottling process), but some were acts of terrorism that took lives and terrified consumers across the country.

It was the FDA that had to deal with those crises. For the most part, the agency handled them well, issuing warnings and working closely with industry to pull products off the shelves. But within the FDA, the fear of additional cyanide poisoning became the full-time bogeyman of the upper echelons of the agency. Everybody was waiting for "the big one," a major eruption of food or drug tampering that would hold the entire nation hostage. "I was waiting for this to happen," Young said after the Chilean grape scare. "This was not at all a surprise. [I knew that] it would eventually come to a major international tam-

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pering." The FDA was so sure, say the Chilean growers, that the fear became father to the event.

HERBERT BURKHOLZ is writing a book about the FDA in the 1980s.

A case against peremptory challenges.

JURYMANDERING

By Jeff Rosen

A black and Hispanic jury in Brooklyn has acquitted the black teenager charged in the murder of Yankel Rosenbaum. A white jury in Simi Valley, California, refused to convict the accused white assailants of Rodney King. The symmetrical verdicts are being invoked to support a radically separatist premise: that jurors can never overcome their racial loyalties and prejudices, that race is inseparable from justice. Multiculturalists on the left and traditionalists on the right are now saying that American juries should be more racially contrived, not less; and that the false promise of colorblind justice should be abandoned. The truth is the separatist premise is both empirically questionable and constitutionally offensive. And the problem with recent Supreme Court decisions is that they do not go far enough in prohibiting the exclusion of jurors based on stereotypes of any kind.

Until recently the Supreme Court's pronouncements about race and juries were wildly inconsistent. One line of cases steadily expanded the representative character of the jury pool, culminating in the 1975 requirement that jury lists—but not the actual jury panels—reflect a "fair cross-section" of the community from which they were drawn. (See "Racial Justice" by Andrew Kull, page 17.) In a separate line of cases, however, the Court permitted prosecutors and defense attorneys to engage in covert racial discrimination during jury selection. The mechanism was a system of peremptory challenges, in which both sides are allowed to strike a specific number of jurors without giving any reasons at all.

Traditionally, prosecutors and defense attorneys used their peremptory challenges to exclude jurors based on the crudest racial stereotypes: a 1973 Dallas County prosecutors manual advised that peremptories should be used to eliminate "any member of a minority group" because "you are not looking for a fair juror, but rather a strong, biased, and sometimes hypocritical individual who believes that Defendants are different from them in kind, rather than degree." Well into the 1980s, Southern officials used their peremptory challenges to ensure that few blacks actually sat on juries.

Finally, in 1986, the Supreme Court dramatically reversed itself, holding that when prosecutors use their peremptory challenges to keep blacks off juries, even for strategic reasons, they violate the potential jurors' right to equal protection of the laws. (Last June the Court applied the same reasoning to defense attorneys.) But in a series of dissents and concurrences, the conservative justices—Burger, Rehnquist, Scalia, and Thomas—have fervently defended the use of racial stereotypes in jury selection. Burger called peremptory challenges "'a system that allows the covert expression of what we dare not say but know is true more often than not'," namely, that defendants are likely to sympathize with members of their own race and be hostile to members of others. It was reasonable to surmise, Thomas declared, "without direct evidence in any particular case, that all-white juries might judge black defendants unfairly."

The conservative defense of racial stereotyping in jury selection is remarkable on several levels. It is ironic, to say the least, coming from the justices who have consistently attempted to strike down affirmative action programs as a betrayal of colorblind principles. And Rehnquist, Scalia, and Thomas have managed to restrain their concern for black criminal defendants on most other occasions. Their position seems so unprincipled that several legal scholars I talked to suspect some sort of hidden agenda: they think the conservative justices want to preserve peremptory challenges because they fear that Republican white-collar defendants, such as Elliot Abrams, are unlikely to get justice from all-black juries in the District of Columbia.

Most surprising of all, the conservative position is hard to distinguish from that of scholars on the left, like Sheri Lynn Johnson of Cornell Law School, who support explicit racial quotas in jury selection. Believing that white jurors are inherently racist, Johnson argues that defendants should have the right to be tried by at least three jurors from their own racial group. Or, as a 1970 note in the *Yale Law Journal* puts it, "The black litigant and the black community are protected equally not when there is equal *opportunity* for blacks to serve, but when blacks *do* serve on juries." This sounds oddly like Clarence Thomas in 1992.

In addition to being constitutionally offensive, these simplistic assertions about the inherent racism of jurors are empirically questionable. Some studies of voting patterns by mock juries do support a phenomenon psychologists call "in-group bias," in which jurors tend to favor parties of their own race. No one would deny that racial sympathy plays some role in the deliberations of some jurors. But a recent survey of the empirical literature in the *Nebraska Law Review* also points to a more nuanced conclusion: in many cases, minority jurors tend to favor defendants, regardless of race, because they are suspicious of policemen of all races.

The behavior of the predominantly black juries in D.C. seems to support this phenomenon. The percentage of defendants who are not convicted in the D.C. federal court is one of the highest in the nation: 41 percent of jury trials this year have ended in acquittals, hung

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juries, or mistrials. (The national average is about 20 percent.) Within the past two years, furthermore, the number of acquittals in D.C. increased more than five-fold, from eleven in 1989 to sixty-two in 1991. There are several theories about the increasing reluctance of black jurors in D.C. to convict defendants of all ethnic backgrounds. One is the draconian minimum sentences laws passed by Congress in the 1980s. Jay Stephens, the U.S. Attorney for the District, has made a policy of prosecuting small-time drug cases in federal rather than local court, to take advantage of the new law. According to published interviews, many jurors find the minimum sentences so unfair (a first offender gets five years for five grams of cocaine) that they prefer to ignore the law than to apply it.

But the most powerful explanation is that black jurors have grown so mistrustful of the (mostly black) police force that even trivial inconsistencies in testimony are enough to convince them that the police are lying. As a law clerk last year at the U.S. Court of Appeals in D.C., I would occasionally steal upstairs to the district court to watch the jury trials unfold. Most of the cases involved from eight to twelve black jurors, and a black or Hispanic defendant accused of possessing a small amount of crack. In several cases, the defendant had been caught with the drugs, but the jury refused to convict because of minor disagreements among the arresting officers. In one of them, the police had a tip that a man was selling drugs out of his apartment, got a warrant, and found the man cooking crack in his kitchen. But because the two arresting officers disagreed at trial about whether the crack pan was on the stove or the kitchen table, jurors refused to convict.

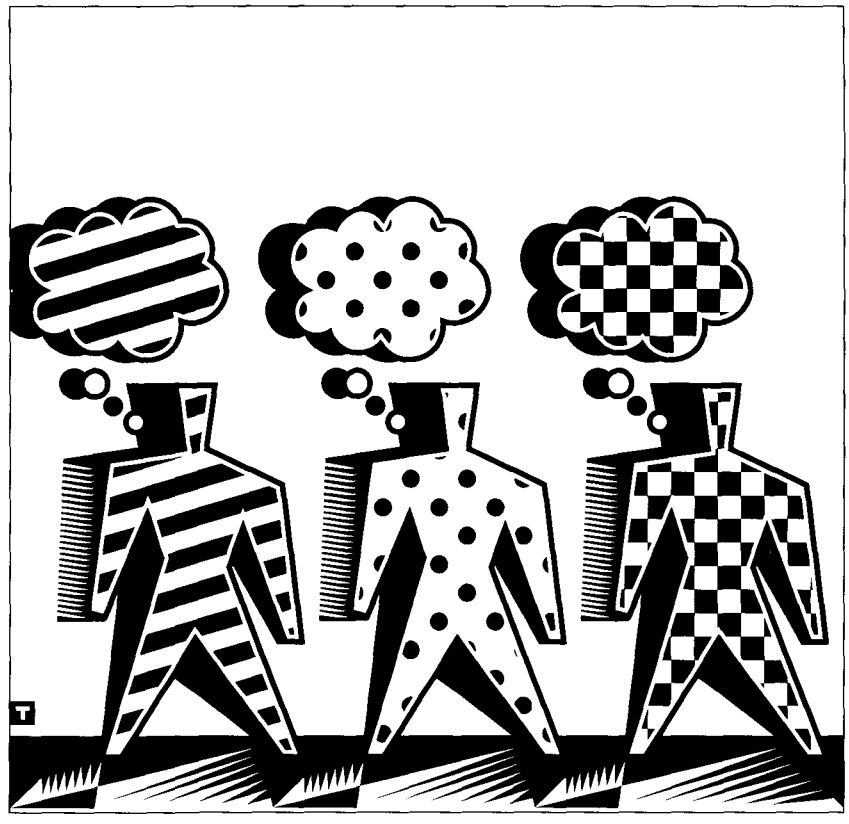

ILLUSTRATION BY JEAN TUTTLE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Friends who clerked on the district court often went back to talk to the jurors after the verdicts. They reported that the jurors who voted to acquit consistently said they thought the police had been lying. Whatever the source of the jurors' mistrust—the most common theory is that black jurors empathize with defendants of all races because they resent having been unfairly hassled by the police—it reflects something more complicated than racial hostility toward whites. The D.C. force is almost 70 percent black, and the Federal Public Defender's Office reports that black jurors vote to acquit roughly the same percentage of Hispanic and white defendants as black ones.

Perhaps the strongest evidence for the view that minority jurors favor defendants of all races is that prosecutors and defense attorneys have traditionally relied on it in exercising their peremptory challenges. Here is Clarence Darrow in 1936:

> The Irishman and the Jew, because of their national background, will put a greater burden on the prosecution and prove more sympathetic and lenient to a defendant, than an Englishman or a Scandinavian whose passion for the enforcement of the law and order is stronger.

And here is *Jury Selection: Strategy and Science*, a comprehensive manual for defense attorneys published in 1991:

> Stereotypically, people from a Mediterranean population are considered desirable as jurors for the plaintiff. Those of Italian, Spanish, and French descent are thought to empathize more readily with the human and emotional side of a lawsuit. Also, those of Slavic, Irish, and Mexican descent, as well as American blacks, are thought to fall into this stereotypical category. Persons of German, Scandinavian, Swedish, Finnish, Dutch, Nordic, Scottish, Asiatic and Russian heritage tend to be stereotypically better for the criminal prosecution. Law and order is highly regarded among these groups.

Clearly, the real problem with the Supreme Court decisions restricting the use of peremptory challenges is that they do not go far enough. Prosecutors and defense attorneys remain free to strike potential jurors for any reason they please—body language, sex, religion, sexual orientation, clothing, occupation, or haircut—as long as they pretend not to be striking them on the basis of race. In light of the recent Supreme Court decisions, lower courts have upheld peremptory strikes based on a prospective juror's "posture and demeanor," "poor attitude in answering questions," "nodding . . . a little bit too much toward [defense counsel] and not enough toward me," and even exuding "something that seemed unfavorable." In a recent Alabama trial, the prosecutor was

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permitted to strike six of the seven blacks in the jury pool for "racially neutral" reasons—one because he was "unkempt and gruff"; another because he resembled the (black) defendant; another because he was "unemployed," and so forth.

The only principled solution is the one Justice Thurgood Marshall proposed in 1986: the elimination of all peremptory challenges. This is the direction in which the Court is heading: the only question is whether it will continue to chip away at the peremptories one at a time, or whether it will do away with them in a clean stroke. The opportunity should present itself in the next year or so, when the Court almost certainly will be asked to decide whether peremptory strikes based on gender are unconstitutional. ("Stereotypically," says the 1991 *Jury Selection* manual, "it has been thought that women jurors are more receptive to emotional arguments regarding pain and suffering.... Men are more tolerant of violence.... Homosexual males are thought to be an exception to this general stereotype.") There is no principled distinction between race and gender discrimination; but there is also no principled justification for discrimination based on clothing or class. As Albert Alschuler of the University of Chicago argues in a recent issue of the *Chicago Law Review*, a system of peremptory challenges that allows attorneys to classify and exclude jurors on the basis of crude stereotypes, ugly hunches, and "what we dare not say but know is true" cannot be consistent with the Constitution.

The abolition of peremptory challenges would transform jury trials in important ways. The peremptory challenge is a convenient way of excluding irrational jurors—those who may not show identifiable biases but give the impression of being somehow bizarre. These tend to be the holdout jurors; and if more of them were seated on jury panels, they would probably produce more hung juries. This would be bad for the government but good for defendants, which makes it all the more suspicious that Scalia and Thomas are fighting to preserve peremptory challenges.

But abolishing peremptory challenges would have dramatic benefits. It would eliminate the use of psychologists, social science experts, and jury selection manuals; and it would reduce the expense of assembling huge jury pools in the most routine cases. The parties, moreover, would continue to have the option, as they do now, of challenging potential jurors "for cause." To support a challenge "for cause," you have to present concrete evidence that an individual juror is likely to be biased in a particular case. Judges would retain the discretion to grant or deny the requests, but would likely take a more liberal view of "for cause" challenges than they do under the current system.

Most importantly, eliminating peremptory challenges would put the separatist premise to an acid test: forcing prosecutors and defense attorneys to provide evidence of bias rather than relying on lazy stereotypes. (The fact that the stereotypes are sometimes true is all the more reason to prove them in individual cases.) And the competing, colorblind faith—that defendants of all races can be judged fairly by juries drawn randomly from the community in which the crime occurred—could finally be tested as well. •

Trial by cross-section.

RACIAL JUSTICE

By Andrew Kull

Was there a single news report on the Rodney King verdict—setting off the Los Angeles riots last spring—that failed to mention the racial composition of that jury in Simi Valley? The universal assumption was that ten whites, one Asian, and one Hispanic could not fairly decide a case in which white police officers were accused of beating a black man, or at least that a verdict of acquittal rendered by such a jury could never be accepted as fair. Even if we indignantly reject the first assumption, events might force us to concede the second.

Suppose you had the job of choosing the people called for jury duty in the court where William Lozano is to be retried—that's the Miami police brutality case—or where the "L.A. Four" will be tried for their part in the televised attack on Reginald Denny, the truck driver dragged from his vehicle at the start of the Rodney King riots. Or just suppose your court handles run-of-the-mill cases in any multiracial, multiethnic community. Current political sensibilities virtually demand that the pool of potential jurors show a good racial and ethnic mix. The closer you can get to proportional representation, the better people will like it.

Supreme Court rulings on the composition of juries pull in the same direction. In 1975 the Court announced that the Sixth Amendment guarantee of an "impartial jury" in criminal cases required that jury lists (though not the jury actually seated in a particular case) reflect a "fair cross-section" of the communities from which they were drawn. This was a new requirement, and it changed the law more radically than might at first appear.

Earlier constitutional doctrine had imposed a negative standard—no discrimination—drawn from the Fourteenth Amendment. States could not exclude blacks, women, or any other significant group from jury service, either overtly or by the discriminatory application of a neutral standard. But a rule of non-discrimination does not require any particular result: states were free to draw potential jurors exclusively from lists of registered voters, for example, so long as voter registration was open to all on equal terms. By contrast, a constitu-

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tional requirement of "fair cross-section" imposes an affirmative duty to put together a jury list in which significant groups are appropriately represented. As criminals began to get their convictions reversed on the ground that women or blacks (or, in later cases, Hispanics or young adults) were underrepresented in local jury lists, court administrators moved swiftly to rectify any imbalance.

DeKalb County, Georgia, where I happen to live, offers an extreme example of the procedures adopted in some jurisdictions. The traditional source of potential jurors in Georgia is the list of registered voters. Because various groups within the population are not equally likely to be registered, however, a jury list drawn at random from the voter list underrepresents some categories by comparison with census figures—notably blacks, males, and people aged 18 to 34. In the aftermath of the Supreme Court's "fair cross-section" decision, county officials tried first to supplement the voter list with other sources of potential jurors. They also tried to encourage non-voters to volunteer for jury duty. These efforts were notably unsuccessful. Faced with the choice between balancing its jury list and losing its ability to convict criminals, DeKalb County decided to adopt the desired results directly.

The method is straightforward. By an analysis of census data, the entire voting-age population of the county is broken down into those groups treated as "cognizable." The relevant groups at present are black males, black females, white males, white females, "other" males, and "other" females, each subdivided into age groups 18 to 24, 25 to 34, 35 to 44, 45 to 54, 55 to 64, and 65 plus. Taken together, these categories yield a grid of thirty-six squares: each square is assigned "requested quota totals" by percentage and, for a jury list of given magnitude, by head count. The computer fills the quotas by a random draw from the list of registered voters in the various categories. (Yes, Georgia records the race of registered voters. This long-standing practice, once arguably unconstitutional, is now welcomed by the Justice Department as a means of facilitating its review of the state's compliance with the Voting Rights Act.)

The computer selection is necessarily less random for some classes of voters than for others. Any black male aged 18 to 24 who registers to vote is virtually guaranteed a spot on the jury list. By contrast, the chance that someone in my own group (middle-aged white male voters) will find his name on the most recent list is just over one in eight. The disparities are less pronounced for other sectors of the grid, but black voters overall are still nearly 40 percent more likely to be drawn than white voters. Jury duty is commonly thought to be one of the burdens of citizenship, not one of its benefits, and its uneven incidence along racial lines appears to deny equal treatment to black voters—subjecting them, in effect, to a racially discriminatory tax on suffrage.

The jury list that results from this process is, moreover, a statistical artifact, not a cross-section of anything. It reflects neither the voting population nor (since non-voters are excluded) the county as a whole. But that's not the objective. What DeKalb County gets for its trouble is a bulletproof jury list, one in which each "cognizable group" enjoys near-perfect proportional representation. As I was told at the courthouse, "When people want to challenge our jury list, we show them these figures. They challenge something else."

The case in which the Supreme Court announced the fair cross-section requirement involved a law affecting the jury participation of women. A Louisiana statute (already repealed when the Court declared it unconstitutional) required that women be left off jury lists unless they filed a notice of their wish to be included. Plainly, an "opt-in" provision like this could have been held unconstitutional under the old non-discrimination standard. (If an optional exemption for women strikes you as a quaint but well-meaning accommodation of the burdens of motherhood, imagine an identical "opt-in" requirement for black jurors.) The Court chose to invalidate the law on the very different ground that it infringed a criminal defendant's affirmative right to a jury drawn from "a representative cross-section of the community." The announcement of a new constitutional test, in a case that could easily have been decided on the basis of an old one, signaled an important change in the way the Court conceived the underlying problem.

The shift from non-discrimination to fair cross-section as a standard for jury lists paralleled the redefinition of other, more visible aspects of the law of race during the early 1970s. School desegregation turned into racial balancing; "no discrimination" in employment under the Civil Rights Act came to mean "no disparate impact"; "voting rights" became a claim to proportional representation. The transition in every case was from a prohibition of racial discrimination to a demand for race-specific results. The social ideal reflected by the legal rules was no longer a world in which racial distinctions were irrelevant, but one in which racial groups achieved representation in proportion to their numbers.

The discovery that a criminal defendant had a Sixth Amendment right to trial by a cross-section of the community made a problematic addition to the list, because it imposed a requirement that the Court was not prepared to address in logically coherent fashion. "Fair cross-section," the Court has insisted, concerns only the jury list. Neither the group summoned to jury duty on a particular day, nor the panel of prospective jurors assigned to a particular case, nor the jury ultimately seated needs meet the test. But this crucial limitation is practical, not logical. Once the consensus of "a representative cross-section of the community" is deemed necessary to produce a just verdict (or a verdict publicly perceived as just), then there is no way to explain why the panel from which each jury is selected should not present a representative cross-section; or, for that matter, why the twelve jurors who hear the case should not

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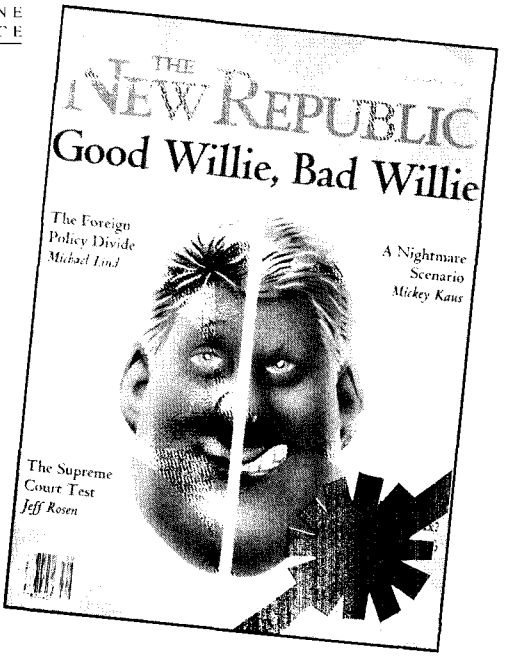

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reflect in obtainable proportion the "cognizable groups" within the community. If we accept the underlying premise of "fair cross-section" but stop short at the jury list, we give the defendant no more than a sporting chance at a trial meeting what is implicitly the constitutional standard.

Some court officials not only accept this logic but propose to do something about it. Instead of summoning potential jurors at random, some Georgia counties have tried programming their computers to summon jurors in groups that mirror the carefully constructed proportionality of the master list. (The practice has been criticized by the Georgia Supreme Court, and its present extent is difficult to ascertain.) In Hennepin County, Minnesota—commonly regarded as one of the nation's most progressive, reform-minded jurisdictions in matters of criminal justice—a task force has recommended that at least two seats on every twenty-three-member grand jury be reserved for members of racial minorities. The proposal is currently under consideration by the Minnesota Supreme Court. If a minority quota can be adopted for grand juries, comparable procedures for trial juries are the logical next step.

ILLUSTRATION BY JEAN TUTTLE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The social and political forces favoring some degree of race-conscious jury selection are nearly irresistible at present, and to discuss the constitutionality of the practice without recognizing these practical constraints would be idle. Yet when the question arises—as it will, sooner or later—we should hope that the courts will avoid saying that institutionalized racial quotas are permissible, whether for jury lists or for juries themselves.

The old aspiration that government deal with individuals without regard to race has a particular force where it touches the voting booth or the jury box. The argument for proportional representation in legislatures and courtrooms rests on the unmistakable premise that a person can neither represent another's interests effectively nor judge him fairly unless he is of the same race. That is the repulsive implication of the modern law of "voting rights," which—since both political parties have apparently decided that it serves their own interests—we are plainly stuck with for the foreseeable future. We now run the risk of extending the same destructive premise to modify our official conception of what constitutes a fair and impartial jury.

Grant, for the sake of argument, that raw racial nerves perceive potential unfairness in *any* decision rendered these days by an "all-white jury." This is a reason to try to avoid seating many such juries. It is still not a reason to admit, at a constitutional level, that a juror's race can be of any consequence. If either the DeKalb County jury list or the proposed Hennepin County grand jury quota were upheld against a constitutional challenge, the implication would be that the judgment of citizens of different races is so fundamentally different that a fair and impartial jury cannot be constituted without offering to each group, in effect, a racial veto. This comes close to denying that Americans of different races share a common citizenship. Some people might deny that we do. Yet a Constitution even acknowledging such a proposition would describe a political system far less attractive than the one to which we ought to aspire.

We still have a choice in the matter. If the ideal of non-discrimination were thought to be important enough, DeKalb County could pursue racially mixed juries the hard way: supplementing voter registration as a source of jurors with lists of licensed drivers, taxpayers, welfare recipients, and every other source of adult citizens' names. Georgia counties don't do it this way, for two reasons. One is the additional time, trouble, and expense. But the second reason is probably the decisive one: trying to come up with a fair-cross-section jury list simply by spreading the net wider will never yield quota-perfect results. No judge has ruled that jury lists must match census data to a tenth of a percentage point, the way they do here, but from the standpoint of a court administrator it's impossible to err on the side of proportionality. The only countervailing consideration—other than the burden on the black voters, which anyone can avoid by not registering—is the distaste people once felt for the

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government's sorting people by race.

The alternative to race-specific measures, in jury selection as in everything else, is the long, costly process of constructing a system whereby race-neutral procedures produce socially acceptable results. The country has been unwilling to undertake that burden in any other context, and on the issue of jury composition—where the pressure for a suitably proportional result is, if anything, more intense than elsewhere—a return to the constitutional standard of non-discrimination is plainly not foreseeable. That is not to say, however, that the resort to racial quotas in the selection of juries—directly or indirectly—should be constitutionally permissible.

Recent Supreme Court decisions prohibiting the use of peremptory challenges to exclude prospective jurors on racial grounds—widely hailed by civil rights advocates—carry necessarily different implications about race and the jury system from those that underlie "fair cross-section." In one of the peremptory-challenge cases, Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote that "if race stereotypes are the price for [public] acceptance of a jury panel as fair, the price is too high to meet the standard of the Constitution." The standard of the Constitution confounds the assumptions of every newspaper story and television newscast about the high-profile trials by which the issue of jury composition comes to public notice. The news media are surely not wrong about this, but neither is the Constitution. We stand caught between what we can't realistically deny and what we can't afford to admit. Better to live with such a contradiction than to resolve it, however, because it preserves for future use a charter for a better society than the one we now inhabit.

ANDREW KULL is the author of *The Color-Blind Constitution* (Harvard University Press).

A view from the pro-life left.

PRO-CHOICE BIGOTS

By Nat Hentoff

Not too long ago, he was a pro-lifer. He wrote and spoke about the right to life and attacked advocates of abortion rights. "There are those who argue that the right to privacy is of a higher order than the right to life," he would say. "That was the premise to slavery. You could not protest the existence or treatment of slaves on the plantation, because that was private and therefore outside of your right to be concerned." He told the story of how he himself had almost been aborted. A physician had advised his mother to let him go, but she wouldn't. Don't let the pro-choicers convince you that a fetus isn't a human being, he warned: "That's how the whites dehumanized us, by calling us niggers. The first step was to distort the image of us as human beings in order to justify that which they wanted to do—and not even feel like they'd done anything wrong."

But as Jesse Jackson decided to run for president in 1984, his fiery pro-life rhetoric suddenly subsided. If being black was a political obstacle, being black and pro-life would raise the odds much too high. Jackson understood that it is hard to be a pro-lifer if you want the support of the left—or just have friends on the left. The lockstep liberal orthodoxy on abortion is pro-choice, as Bill Clinton's election showed and his presidency will reinforce. Dissenters are not tolerated.

Nearly ten years ago I declared myself a pro-lifer. A Jewish, atheist, civil libertarian, left-wing pro-lifer. Immediately, three women editors at *The Village Voice*, my New York base, stopped speaking to me. Not long after, I was invited to speak on this startling heresy at Nazareth College in Rochester (long since a secular institution). Two weeks before the lecture, it was canceled. The women on the lecture committee, I was told by the embarrassed professor who had asked me to come, had decided that there was a limit to the kind of speech the students could safely hear, and I was outside that limit. I was told, however, that I could come the next year to give a different talk. Even the women would very much like me to speak about one of my specialties, censorship in America. I went and was delighted to talk about censorship at Nazareth.

At the *Voice*, some of my colleagues in the editorial department wondered, I was told, when I had converted to Catholicism—the only explanation they could think of for my apostasy. (Once I received a note from someone deep in the ranks of the classified depart-

continued on page 24

NAT HENTOFF is the author of *Free Speech for Me, But Not for Thee: How the Left and the Right Continually Censor Each Other* (HarperCollins).

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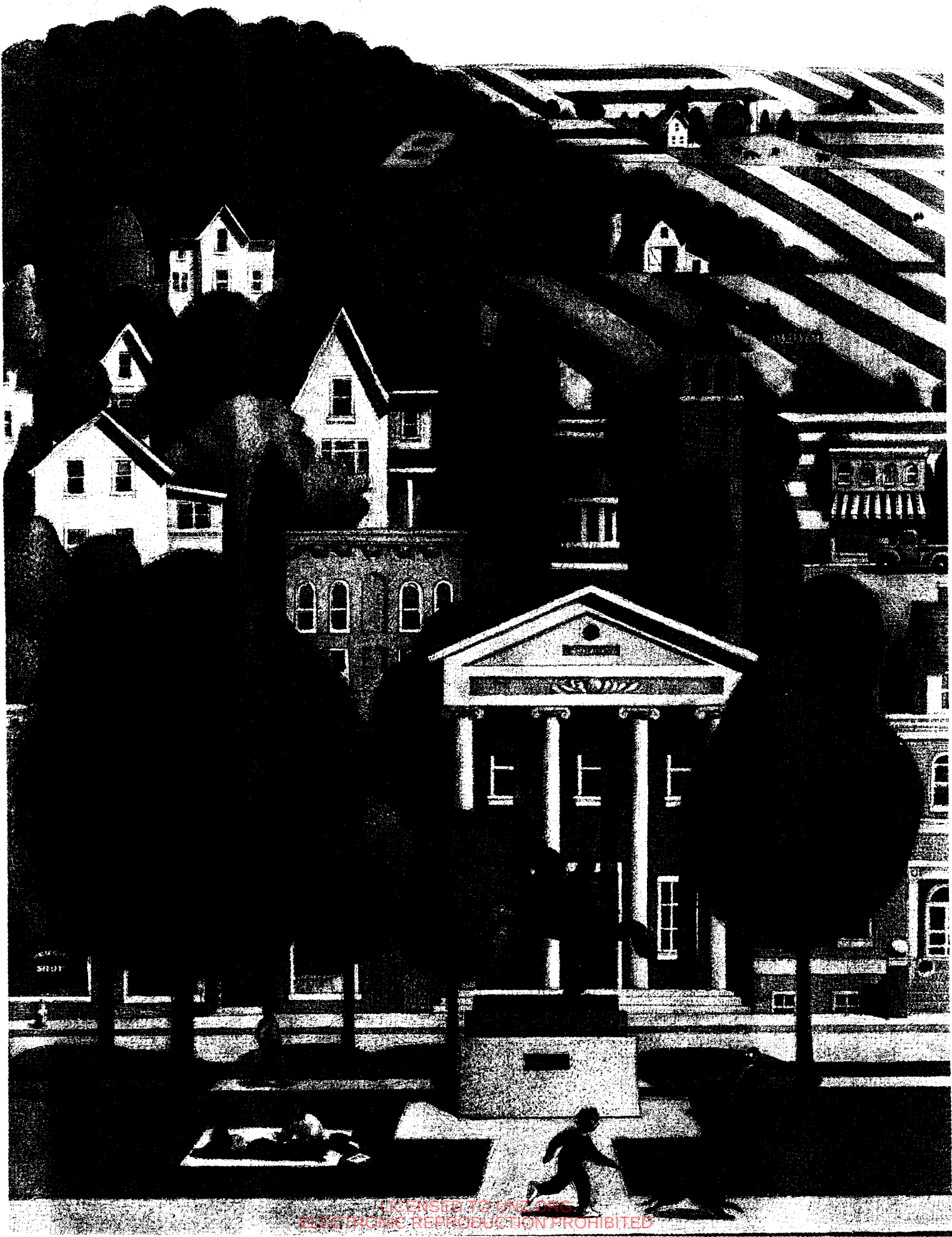

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ment. She too was pro-life, but would I please keep her secret? Life would be unbearable if anyone knew.)

To others, I was a novelty. Interviews were arranged on National Public Radio and various television programs, and I spoke at one of Fred Friendly's constitutional confrontations on PBS. Afterward, men, women, and teenagers wrote from all over the country that they had thought themselves to be solitary pro-lifers in the office, at school, even at home. They were surprised to find that there was someone else who was against capital punishment, against Reagan and Bush, and dismayed at the annual killing of 1.6 million developing human beings. They felt, they told me, that it was absurd to talk blithely of disposing of potential life. These were lives—lives with potential to someday do *New York Times* crossword puzzles and dig Charlie Parker. That is, if they weren't thrown out with the garbage.

I felt less alone myself. In time, I found other heretics. For instance, the bold, witty, crisply intelligent members of Feminists for Life of America. There are some in every state, and chapters in thirty-five. Many of them came out of the civil rights and anti-war movements, and now they also focus on blocking attempts to enact death penalty laws. They have succeeded in Minnesota. You won't see much about Feminists for Life in the press. When reporters look for pro-lifers to interview, they tend to go after pinched elderly men who look like Jesse Helms and women who wear crucifixes.

On the other hand, not all stereotypes are without actual models. As an exotic pro-lifer, I was invited to address an annual Right to Life convention in Columbus, Ohio. The event was held in a large field. A rickety platform faced the predominately Christian crowd.

I told them that as pro-lifers, they ought to oppose capital punishment and the life-diminishing poverty associated with the policies of their Republican president. Ronald Reagan, I emphasized, had just cut the budget for the WIC program (federally funded Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children). He and those who support him, I said, give credence to Massachusetts Representative Barney Frank's line: "Those who oppose abortion are pro-life only up to the moment of birth."

From the back of the crowd, and then moving forward, there were growls, shouts, and table-thumping. Suddenly, a number of people began rushing toward the platform. I said to the man sitting next to me, a leader of the flock, that I had not quite decided that this cause was worth dying for.

As it happened, the souls on fire only wanted to say that I was in grievous error about these Christian presidents because I had not yet found God. Indeed, I often get letters from religious pro-lifers telling me that it is impossible for me to be simultaneously an atheist and a pro-lifer. Some of the pro-abortion-rights leaders whom I have debated are certain of the same correlation. No serious atheist, no Jewish atheist, no left-wing atheist could want to—as my fiercely pro-choice wife puts it—enslave women.

Yet being without theology isn't the slightest hindrance to being pro-life. As any obstetrics manual—*Williams Obstetrics*, for example—points out, there are two patients involved, and the one not yet born "should be given the same meticulous care by the physician that we long have given the pregnant woman." Nor, biologically, does it make any sense to draw life-or-death lines at viability. Once implantation takes place, this being has all the genetic information within that makes each human being unique. And he or she embodies continually developing human life from that point on. It misses a crucial point to say that the extermination can take place because the brain has not yet functioned or because that thing is not yet a "person." Whether the life is cut off in the fourth week or the fourteenth, the victim is one of our species, and has been from the start.

Yet rational arguments like these are met with undiluted hostility by otherwise clear-thinking liberals. Mary Meehan, a veteran of the anti-war movement, tried to pierce this pall of left orthodoxy in a 1980 article in *The Progressive*:

> Some of us who went through the anti-war struggles of the 1960s and 1970s are now active in the right-to-life movement. We do not enjoy opposing our old friends on the abortion issue, but we feel that we have no choice. We are moved by what pro-life feminists call the "consistency thing"—the belief that respect for human life demands opposition to abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia, and war.... It is out of character for the left to neglect the weak and helpless. The traditional mark of the left has been its protection of the underdog, the weak, and the poor.... The unborn child is the most helpless form of humanity, even more in need of protection than the poor tenant farmer or the mental patient.

Meehan's article provoked an extraordinary amount of mail. A few writers praised *The Progressive* for having enough respect for its readers to expose them to a perspective opposite to the magazine's. But the great percentage of letter writers were furious, indignant that a "left" magazine should print such vicious right-wing propaganda.

Because defending the killing of the fetus is inconsistent with the liberal/left worldview in other matters, the abortion rights orthodoxy has relied on extraordinary hypothetical arguments to justify its position in the twenty years since the *Roe* decision. Take two examples. In 1971, when abortion was legalized in New York state, an editorial on WCBS radio in New York attempted to define abortion as an act of compassion: "It is one sensible method of dealing with such problems as overpopulation, illegitimacy, and possible birth defects," the announcer said. "It is one way of fighting the rising welfare rolls and the increasing number of child abuse cases."

In 1992 the defense has changed. No longer a means of compassion, abortion is now viewed as a form of preemptive law enforcement. As Nicholas von Hoffman writes in the *New York Observer*:

"Free, cheap abortion is a policy of social defense. To

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save ourselves from being murdered in our beds and raped on the streets, we should do everything possible to encourage pregnant women who don't want the baby and will not take care of it to get rid of the thing before it turns into a monster. . . .

"At their demonstrations, the anti-abortionists parade around with pictures of dead and dismembered fetuses. The pro-abortionists should meet these displays with some of their own: pictures of the victims of the unaborted—murder victims, rape victims, mutilation victims—pictures to remind us that the fight for abortion is but part of the larger struggle for safe homes and safe streets."

As a sometime admirer of von Hoffman, I take this to be—maybe—his assuming the role of Jonathan Swift in these hard times, but it doesn't matter particularly whether he's serious or not. Those who see abortion as a cost-effective, even humane, way to thin the ranks of the lower orders are not few in number.

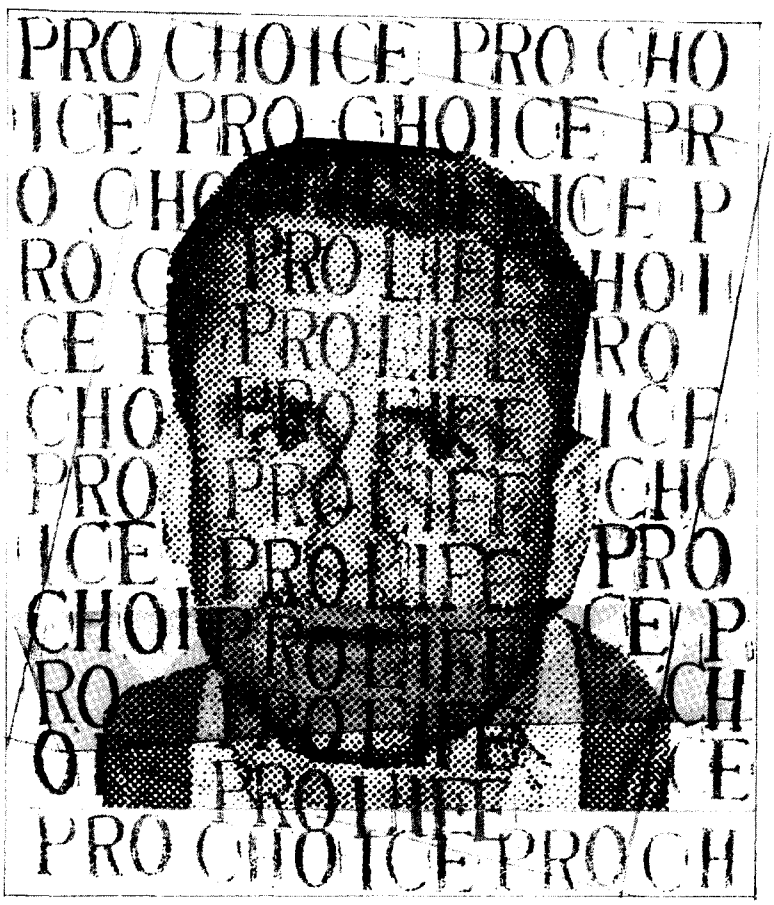

ILLUSTRATION BY TOM PRESTON FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Pro-choicers clearly are only interested in their version of the choice in this matter. But why are the liberals among them so immovably illiberal only when it comes to abortion? The male pro-choicers, by and large, consider this to be entirely an issue for women to decide. And the only women they know are pro-choice. If a man has any doubts or subversive ambivalences, he keeps them to himself because should he speak of them, he will be banished from the company of all the progressive women he knows—and any whom he might hope to know.

Pro-choice women are so unyielding because they profoundly believe that without the power to abort at will, they will be enslaved. Once an abortion is wanted, the fetus, as one woman told me, is—to some women—"the enemy within." In the fight not to be enslaved, liberalism is an abstraction.

Accordingly, I am no longer surprised to find myself considered an external enemy. For years, American Civil Liberties Union affiliates around the country invited me to speak at their fund-raising Bill of Rights dinners. But once I declared myself a pro-lifer, all such invitations stopped. They know I agree with them on most ACLU policies, but that no longer matters. I am now no better than Jesse Helms. Free speech, after all, has its limits.

This disdain on the left for anything or anyone pro-life has clearly taken a toll on the political process. Liberal/left politicians who remain true to their philosophy and oppose abortion are virtually impossible to find. Like Jackson, most simply cave in to abortion rights pressure, fearing that no matter how left-leaning they are on other issues, if they come out against abortion they will be branded as right-wing fanatics. Governor Robert Casey of Pennsylvania, a liberal pro-life Democrat, was forbidden from speaking at this year's Democratic convention. And when *The Village Voice* later offered him a forum in New York to talk and answer questions about whether it is possible to be both liberal and pro-life, he (and I, the putative moderator) was shouted down by pro-choicers. Meanwhile, the president-elect, who has been on both sides of the abortion question during his career, has already pledged to satisfy his pro-choice backers by requiring that any nominee to the Supreme Court be an explicit and public supporter of abortion rights.

I saw Jesse Jackson recently on a train, and we talked for quite a while about George Bush's awful nomination of Ed Carnes to the federal bench. An assistant attorney general in Alabama, Carnes built his reputation on sending people to "Yellow Mama," the state's electric chair. He would replace Frank Johnson, whom Martin Luther King once described as "the man who gave true meaning to the word justice." (A few weeks later Jackson joined the campaign to defeat the nomination. To no avail. Carnes was eventually confirmed.) I then asked Jackson about another form of execution. I told him that in speeches I often quote what he wrote as a pro-lifer. He looked uncomfortable. I asked him if he still believed what he said then. "I'll get back to you on that," he said. He hasn't yet. •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Ending and Beginning

Right after last week's mention of Antonin Artaud, here's another. In 1947, the year before he died, he brought forth a long rhapsody titled, "Van Gogh, the Man Suicided by Society," a late-Artaudian mix of rant, sense, and ecstatic vision. In it he says:

> [Van Gogh] did not commit suicide in a fit of madness, in dread of not succeeding / on the contrary, he had just succeeded, and discovered what he was and who he was, when the collective consciousness of society, to punish him for escaping from its clutches, / suicided him . . .
>
> No one has ever written, painted, sculpted, modeled, built, or invented except literally to get out of hell.

This is all as true as it needs to be, written by one mental-patient artist about another, and is apposite to Maurice Pialat's **Van Gogh** (Sony Classics).

Films on this subject are not in short supply, but Pialat justifies his (which he wrote) by concentrating on the last sixty-seven days of Van Gogh's life, after his arrival at Auvers-sur-Oise for treatment by Dr. Gachet; and by trying to make his film as Van Gogh might have done it. The stars don't whirl, and the trees are not hung with tiles of color, nothing like that. But the acting, the pacing, the lingerings, the disregard of expectation suggest that Pialat is attempting a heterodoxy prompted by the painter's great example.

Instance: Marguerite, Dr. Gachet's daughter, comes to the Paris home of Van Gogh's brother, Theo, at night looking for Vincent, who is in the city. Theo changes from his nightclothes in order to help her in the search. The camera remains on her face while he changes in the next room. Any film student knows that the camera ought to go with the action—Theo's changing—or ought to cut to cover a time lapse. Pialat keeps the camera on Marguerite's face: to allow her to manifest her anxiety for Vincent and also to try our patience—a patience bred on clichés.

Further instance: Theo takes her to a bordello where they find Vincent romping (along with Toulouse-Lautrec). We then revel through the night until dawn—not in a continuous sequence but in a series of games, dancings, flirtings, and fulfillments, presented like distinct panels in a long latitudinal painting. Dramatic energy is discarded for (almost) painterly inquiry.

There are also odd unexplained items, like an unidentified painter who tries to "correct" one of Van Gogh's canvases. But Pialat uses all these devices toward an Artaudian end: without blatant subjectivity, he wants to give us Van Gogh's view of the world around him, a man who—though he wants bitterly to sell his paintings, though he is highly sexed—views even friendliness as potentially hostile, as potential "clutch." This man is a long way from the earlier, missionary Van Gogh. (About the notorious ear: he only nicked it in Arles, he didn't cut it off.)

With this Vincent in mind, Pialat has chosen an actor, Jacques Dutronc, who can move through gatherings without being present. Dutronc, a former singer-songwriter, has appeared in twenty-five films, most of them not shown here, and he gives a performance with no trace of the stock mad artist. This Vincent is concerned with living inside himself, even when he is with a woman. He rarely looks at anyone for long—hardly looks at the people to whom he is speaking. The impression that Dutronc gives, doubtlessly as guided by Pialat, is of a premature revenant, moving among live people to whom he manifests himself, to some more than to others but to all impermanently.

Does this film add anything to our information about Van Gogh? Of course not. But unlike Minelli's mad-genius *Lust for Life* or Altman's ill-acted *Vincent and Theo*, it suggests what it really might have been like to be around Van Gogh during those last days before he shot himself (and took two days to die).

Only one matter, I think, could have been improved. After the death, in his narrow bed in his little room, the camera remains with him when the door closes. It was a tacit, poignant stroke to leave us alone with the dead man; it would have been an excellent place to finish. But Pialat continues past the funeral to give Marguerite the last line—informing an inquirer, who asks whether she had known Van Gogh, that she had been his friend. Too ironic. Too Warner Brothers 1930s bio-pic.

But Alexandra London, as Marguerite, has the right reserved sexuality fired by pathos, and Gérard Sety, as Dr. Gachet, has the right air of deluded insight; because he is an amateur

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Bob Roberts. *Plenty of heat, though not much light, in this sizzler about a political campaign. Tim Robbins wrote, directed, and stars. (Reviewed 10/5/92)* **Glengarry Glen Ross.** *If it's a tad less powerful than the play, David Mamet's screen adaptation is still gripping in its flaying of cheap salesmen's lives. Al Pacino leads a first-class cast. (10/26/92)* **Of Mice and Men.** *John Steinbeck's "tragedy" wears fairly well. Gary Sinise is very appealing as the staunch George; John Malkovich lacks weight as the helpless ox, Lenny. (11/2/92)* **Simple Men.** *The third feature by an increasingly noteworthy young American, Hal Hartley. The quasi-abstract account, with much quiet wit, of the search by two brothers for their fugitive radical father. (11/9/92)* **—SK**

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painter, he feels he understands Van Gogh but is basically jealous of him. (A certain parallel here with Dr. Ferdière and Artaud in the sanitarium at Rodez.) Bernard Le Coq and Corinne Bourdon do all that is needful as Theo and his wife.

Pialat has had a peculiar film career: it started late—in 1960 when he was 35—and didn't promise well. His early films, *L'enfance nue* and *Loulou*, seemed to me indulgently overrated. But then in 1983 came *A nos amours*, in 1985 *Police*, and in 1987 the haunting *Under the Sun of Satan*. Inevitably then, *Van Gogh* is sustained with the confidence of acquired mastery and idiosyncratic, serious purpose. In its 155 minutes, it braves the irritation of some viewers to win the admiration of those who like to be challenged when the challenge is sound.

Another film about a French artist, **Becoming Colette** (Castle Hill), is at the other end of the spectrum: it wants to be loved. This account of Colette's early years in Paris after marrying Willy, of his prodding her into writing novels and his taking credit for them, of her eventual independence, is constructed in the most tired, trite way, and it drips with banal dialogue. (In English.) The press kit mentions no script author but says the "screenplay revision" was by Burt Weinshanker. You quit too soon, Weinshanker.

Too bad—especially because this cast deserved a good screenplay. Mathilda May, who strongly resembles the young Leslie Caron, might have been moving and tender. Klaus Maria Brandauer, though not the pot-bellied, bearded Willy of fact, could have done a good doting Mephistopheles. And Virginia Madsen, as the actress who is Colette's first lesbian lover, has the requisite intelligence and flair.

But Danny Huston, son of John, is no chip off the old block, not much more than a splinter. Some of his directing is barely passable, but he has no sense of the ridiculous, or he couldn't have shot the scene, as written, in which Willy announces his new novel to a literary gathering. And Huston's idea of emphasis is to insert huge close-ups, not always a face—sometimes it's a bosom or a garter.

However, *Becoming Colette* has one triumph: the costumes by Barbara Baum. She was the costume designer for several Fassbinder films, including the exquisite *Effi Briest*. Here Baum's costumes, as photographed by another German, Wolfgang Treu, become the most gratifying element in the film. Not what either Baum or Treu intended, presumably. •

"A disturbing, timely report."*

ZEALOTS FOR ZION

Inside Israel's West Bank Settlement Movement

Robert I. Friedman

A compelling look deep inside the Middle East's most volatile region, *Zealots for Zion* vividly reports on this world of religious extremists, young urban commuters, Israeli soldiers, and the Palestinians who live among them — and offers new insights into the possibility of eventual reconciliation.

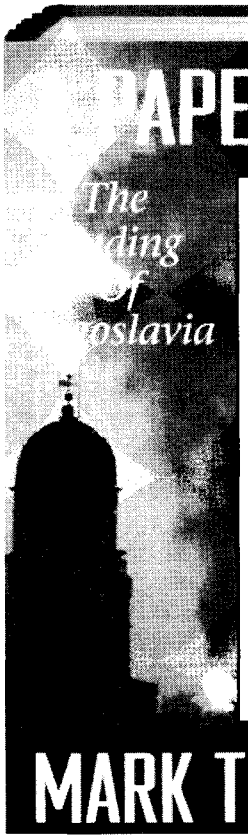
Robert I. Friedman, the author of *The False Prophet: Rabbi Meir Kahane*, won the Smolar Award for Excellence in North American Jewish Journalism and was awarded an Alicia Patterson Fellowship to chronicle the rise of the radical right in Israel.

Illustrated with maps

Photo : © Micha Baram/Magnum Photos

* *Publishers Weekly*

RANDOM HOUSE



PAPER HOUSE

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FAMINE. CONCENTRATION CAMPS. ATROCITIES. ETHNIC CLEANSING.

The breakup of Yugoslavia. Behind the daily headlines are centuries of internecine strife—and thousands of human faces. Now a journalist who has lived and traveled in Yugoslavia since 1987 takes us to the heart of this troubled land, revealing its complex history and exploring the lives of people overtaken by age-old quarrels and violent change.

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—*The Philadelphia Inquirer*

PANTHEON

MARK THOMPSON

JUST ARRIVED IN BOOKSTORES

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What the Jews, even under siege, owe liberalism.

Enemies, a Love Story

By Robert Alter

On May 1, 1921, armed Arab rioters in Jaffa began to attack whatever Jews they could waylay or surround. During the next few days, as the violence spread across the countryside, Zionist settlements were put to the torch and scores of Jews were murdered, among them the eminent Hebrew novelist Y. H. Brenner. The first wave of anti-Zionist violence of truly national scope, it was, alas, a harbinger of grimmer things to come. Some months later the Zionist community was shaken by the report of an innocent Arab boy murdered by a group of young Jews as an act of retribution.

Ha-Aretz, the leading Hebrew daily, denounced the killing. The paper then published a letter of response from Ahad Ha-Am (the pen name of Asher Ginsberg), the ideologue of "cultural" or "spiritual" Zionism who, in Odessa, had inspired many of the Zionist settlers and was living out his last days in Tel Aviv. Ahad Ha-Am scathingly rejected the very idea of vengeance: "Is *this* the dream of the 'return to Zion,'... that we should come to Zion and befoul its soil by the shedding of innocent blood?" Thoroughly European in all his assumptions, Ahad Ha-Am suggested that blood vengeance might well be a value of the Levant, but that the Jews had not returned to their land to undergo such a process of Levantinization. "If that's the 'messiah,'" his letter concluded, "may he not come in my time!"

The earliest Zionist settlers toward the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century generally managed to shield themselves from any perception that they were thrusting themselves into historical circumstances that would lead them—that would compel them—to use armed force. Anita Shapira, the foremost contemporary historian of Zionism, reconstructs in meticulous detail the complicated and often contradictory story of Zionist attitudes toward armed struggle. Her book is an instructive historical study, though somewhat verbose and needlessly repetitious, and unfortunately not well served in an English version riddled with errors of usage and construal.

One infers, at least from the concluding sentences of the book, that Shapira, who teaches at Tel Aviv University, is a political moderate, but her book is not intended as an instrument of advocacy. Instead she carefully documents all the evolving positions through the seven decades until statehood, moving back and forth from the blood-and-fire militancy of the Revisionist right (often shared by elements of the Socialist left) to the pacifism or near-pacifism of the Brit Shalom proponents of a binational state. Her accounts of specific episodes of violence between Arab and Jew in the pre-statehood period are not intended to exhibit Jews as either victims or victimizers. Victimhood was surely the more prevalent condition for Palestinian Jews until 1948, though the historical record also reveals a good many instances of victimization, as one would expect when two self-assertive peoples clash over one piece of land. Shapira's scrutiny of what she calls the "defensive ethos" among Zionists has the effect of showing how the creators of the future Jewish state developed a rationale adequate to justify the use of force, but also sufficient to place moral restraints on it.

If I Am Not for Myself . . . : The Liberal Betrayal of the Jews
by Ruth R. Wisse
(Free Press, 225 pp., $22.95)

Land and Power: The Zionist Resort to Force, 1881-1948
by Anita Shapira
translated by William Templer
(Oxford University Press, 464 pp., $59)

Ruth R. Wisse's highly personal book, in striking contrast, is not a work of scholarship but a passionate polemic, and as such it is marked by a series of terrible simplifications that urgently need to be addressed, not least at this pivotal moment in the history of Israel. I can limn her central argument by saying that its logic would almost certainly have required her to denounce Ahad Ha-Am in 1922 as a spineless self-hating Jew who did not hesitate to subvert the Zionist enterprise in order to win the approval of his liberal European friends. With precious little qualification, that is how Wisse characterizes virtually all critics of Israeli actions and policies, whether they are American Jewish liberals or Israelis of the left and center, including many who have stalwartly served in three or more wars and have seen friends and comrades perish in combat.

I have said that this is a passionate book, and it is only fair to give passion its due. The child of a Russian Jewish family that very narrowly escaped the Holocaust, Wisse is possessed by a single powerful idea that is palpably rooted in recent historical reality. It is that the world wants to destroy the Jews, or at the very least is happy to acquiesce in their destruction. Since the demise of Nazism, the chief agent of destruction has been the Arab peoples, from the Maghreb to Iraq, who have repeatedly refused to accept Israel's existence, who have aspired overtly and covertly to drive the Jewish state into the sea. In the infamous United Nations resolution of 1975 that equated Zionism with racism, the Arabs succeeded in promulgating a quasi-legal definition of Israel as a pariah state, alone among all the tyrannical, corrupt, barbaric—even, in a couple of instances, cannibalistic—regimes that send representatives to the General Assembly. Against this hostile background, against the effectiveness and progressive sophistication of Arab anti-Zionist propaganda, Wisse is convinced that every day is Masada. And since Israel's survival is constantly, axiomatically threatened, any criticism opens a gate in the besieged city to the intransigent foe. In such dire circumstances, indeed, all criticism must itself be motivated by a sick or cynical complicity with the enemy.

One may grant Wisse the urgency of her emotional response to a genuine threat to the Jewish people and yet emphatically resist both the terms of her analysis and the consequences that she draws from her particular perception of the threat. The historical details of the Israeli-Arab conflict are rather more complicated than Wisse's version of them, as any reader of Shapira's study will quickly discover.

Critics of Israeli policies, within Israel and beyond its borders, are tidily collected by Wisse under the term "liberal," or under the interesting but gravely misleading conflation "left-liberal." The worldview of this purportedly cohesive

Robert Alter is the author most recently of *The World of Biblical Literature* (Basic Books).

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group is characterized in language like this: "As tolerant folk who want to live and let live, liberals trust that all human problems are amenable to negotiated solutions, that all people are united in a spirit of brotherhood, and that history itself is a record of progress." There is a peculiar skid in this sentence, and it is symptomatic of the larger argument of the book. In the first of its assertions, liberals figure as meek, mild-mannered, conflict-evading naïfs, eternal members in good standing of the Scarsdale chapter of the ACLU. Then, as the sentence slides through brotherhood to history as a record of progress, we are edged into the assumptions of Marxist and progressivist determinism—a far more insidious kind of naïveté, though by no means meek. No allowance is made, in other words, for the possibility of a tough-minded or pragmatic liberal.

One would never imagine from such an account that many of the architects of American resistance to the Soviet Union were liberals, or that most of the guiding spirits of Israel's defenses have been liberals. Surely Wisse knows that there are profound differences between a venomously anti-Zionist propagandist such as Noam Chomsky and staunch friends of Israel who have voiced criticisms such as Nathan Glazer and Seymour Martin Lipset and Irving Howe, but one could scarcely guess it from this book. (Howe is not actually mentioned, no doubt out of respect to Wisse's years of collaboration with him on Yiddish literature. Glazer, who may be surprised to find himself represented as "a perfect specimen of American Jewish liberalism," is excoriated with an anti-Chomskian vehemence for saying that Zionism involved a dispossession of Palestinian Arabs and for neglecting to balance this with an attack on the Arab campaign against Israel.)

If "left-liberalism" thus portrayed is so invariably and uniformly blind to political realities, it follows that the motives for adherence to it must be suspect ones, a theme that Wisse stresses repeatedly and makes one of the most unpleasant aspects of her argument. (Wisse does not attribute reasons to those who disagree with her, only motives.) Thus, the tendency of American Jews to vote to the left of their own economic interests is explained as "the desire to dissociate oneself from a people under attack by advertising their own goodness." Or more crudely: "The Jews valued liberalism more than their money, because without acceptance, money profited them little more than Shylock's."

Wisse finds this same attitude in Israeli intellectuals. Their criticism of their own country, their sympathy for the plight of the Palestinians, are seen here as a reflex of "solipsistic liberalism," as an "internalization of the Jewish diaspora," as a pathetic craving for acceptance abroad: "The rewards that they get from overseas readers and publishers for delivering up the image of the ugly Israeli cannot obscure the ugliness of the cultural trend that this image represents." Self-criticism in Israeli literature, which is one of its main themes and main glories, is thus reduced to a tawdry commercial transaction: the writers "deliver up" a negative image for foreign consumption in exchange for material and other "rewards."

Wisse's account of the critical impulse in Israeli culture is one of the falsest notes in her book, and one of the nastiest. She is right, of course, in her contention that there is drastic asymmetry in the Israeli-Arab conflict: on the one side, an open society, a broad spectrum of opinions, including manifestations of sympathetic understanding for the other, and "liberalism"; on the other side, closed societies, hard-clenched hostility, relentless propagandistic distortion of the other, and "illiberalism." But this immense disparity hardly means that Israelis have never committed reprehensible acts, or that drawing attention to such acts is a "betrayal" of the national enterprise. Democracies can also do

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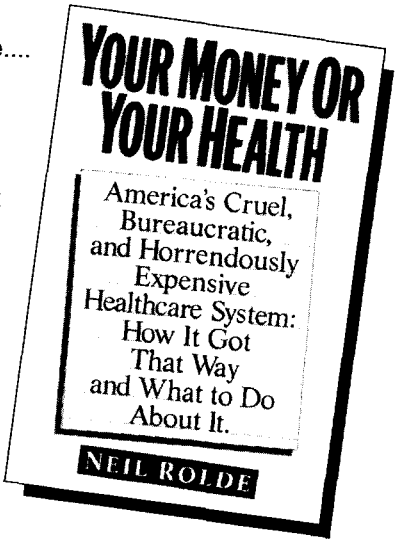
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wrong. Only in a democracy, however, can a nation's own wrongs be freely criticized and freely corrected.

It is wildly inaccurate to claim that such criticism is produced largely for foreign consumption, and it is scurrilous to suggest that its chief motive is an absence of self-esteem, a craven desire for acceptance abroad. Wisse bases her indictment of Hebrew literature on half a dozen selected texts, which she willfully misreads. For all her personal acquaintance with Israel and its language, she seems oddly ignorant of the last nine decades of Hebrew literature and its role in contemporary Israeli society. If Yehuda Amichai, Amos Oz, A. B. Yehoshua, S. Yizhar, and David Grossman are all accomplices in the liberal betrayal of Israel, who, apart from the chiliasts of Gush Emunim and the likes of Ariel Sharon and Rafael Eitan, are its defenders?

What Wisse essentially fails to see in Israel is the symbiotic coexistence in the same writers of sharp criticism and deep commitment. It is not true, as she claims, that an adversarial literature began in 1948 with Yizhar and, coming as an unwarranted surprise, "had the force of a son's stinging slap against his father's face." The truth is that the grandfathers' faces had been repeatedly slapped by Hebrew writers as far back as the turn of the century. Y. H. Brenner's scathing criticism of the ineptitude and the moral obtuseness of Zionism in his day makes Yizhar or Grossman look moderate. The great poet Bialik, whom Wisse celebrates for his "national pathos" (a phrase that would have made him wince), wrote a series of devastating poems, one of them after attending a Zionist congress, that denounced the spiritual emptiness and the political corruption of those who had come to lead the Zionist undertaking in which he was himself profoundly involved. Is it really necessary to insist that he did not write these poems for the sake of adulation in *The New York Times*? Neither did Oz when he wrote *In the Land of Israel*, or Grossman when he wrote *The Yellow Wind*, both books having been born as investigative reporting in the Israeli press, urgently addressed to Israeli readers, for the good of Israel.

In Wisse's version, Israeli literature is marred by "duplicity" and "self-indulgence," its art "twisted" by a desire to conform to liberal stereotypes. She seems to assume that the only appropriate literary response to Arab propaganda is Israeli propaganda, or an apologetic literature that idealizes the Jewish state (as she herself does in a number of passages). It is odd to find an accomplished teacher of literature like Wisse not allowing for the possibility that Israeli writers, like writers elsewhere, might see things in their own environment that genuinely disturb them, that invite exposure because they violate their sense of what their country ought to be.

A case in point is Yizhar's famous story, written in 1948, called "The Prisoner," which has been frequently anthologized in English translation. (Wisse does not mention a parallel story by Yizhar from the same period, "Hirbet Hizah," about the forced expulsion of a group of Arabs from their village.) "The Prisoner" is about the gratuitous torture of an Arab shepherd during the Israeli War of Independence, told from the viewpoint of a soldier-witness—no doubt a "liberal"—who becomes increasingly disturbed by what he sees. Wisse devotes several angry pages to Yizhar's story. She displays no awareness of the fact that David Ben-Gurion, during the fighting in 1948, actually saw to it that copies of this story were circulated among the troops.

Why? Because he, unlike Wisse, did not assume that it was intended as a generally representative image of Israeli behavior toward Arabs that would aid and abet enemy propaganda. He recognized that such incidents did occur (as they still do in the occupied territories) and that they deserved to be ruthlessly exposed. Zionism was obliged to use force in order to survive, but the use of force is never innocent, even when it is justified; and the moral test comes when a society recognizes, and is prepared to admit, that a use of force has become an abuse of force. The abuse of force, as Ben-Gurion understood, was nothing less than a betrayal of Zionism. Yizhar did not have to be a self-abasing, approval-hungry liberal to write either of these stories. (And in fact they are unusual moments in his oeuvre, which is for the most part devoted to the introspective experience of Israelis in relation to themselves, most remarkably his 1,200-page stream-of-consciousness novel, never translated, about the War of Independence, *The Days of Ziklag*.) To write these stories, Yizhar had only to be a decent and honest Zionist.

Wisse's attempt to link political judgments with aesthetic ones is instructive in its inadequacy. She criticizes the "forced rhetoric" of Yizhar's story (which she appears to have read only in translation) as a manifestation of its "pseudomorality." Now, Yizhar's prose was influenced from the start by Thomas Wolfe and Faulkner, with a strong admixture of the early twentieth-century Hebrew master of interior monologue, U. N. Gnessin. The style of "The Prisoner" is the style of all his work, irrespective of subject. One could conceivably argue that his general fondness for synonymity, for proliferation of details, for long, convoluted sentences, is an attachment to "forced rhetoric," but that has very little to do with his political views.

Thus, the autobiographical *Advance Payments*, Yizhar's first novel in three decades, published just this summer in Israel, includes a remarkable chapter in which the child-protagonist and his parents huddle with all the families of their Jaffa neighborhood in a barricaded courtyard while the murderous Arab gangs of the 1921 riots rage through the streets around them. As far as I can tell, there is no fundamental difference in style between this representation of Jews as innocent victims and the representation of Jews as victimizers in "The Prisoner" and "Hirbet Hizah." By Wisse's standards of evaluation, however, she would have to conclude from the new novel that what was once forced rhetoric has been magically transformed into evocative, truth-telling lyric richness.

One reads this strident attack on all the world's Jews to the left of Wisse with a mixture of sadness and dismay. She has written sensitive criticism of Yiddish literature and has had valuable things to say about the cultural predicament of modern Jews. Her concern for the survival of Israel is deep and sincere. But a viable defense of Israeli interests cannot be based on a misrepresentation of the nature of the hostility confronting Israel, or on a tendentious avoidance of the contradictions and the ambiguities that have marked so many aspects of the Zionist enterprise from its inception. Wisse is surely right in her contention that Israel needs friends, but it is distressing that she should peremptorily remove from that category anyone who presumes to express disagreement with Israeli actions or policies. Her enemies list of Israeli intellectuals is made up of people who are loyal, concerned citizens. In the recent elections, most of them were active on behalf of the moderate left Meretz party or the centrist Labor, and the representatives of the new government have already been exhibiting a remarkable combination of toughness, prudence, and flexibility at the negotiating table, no doubt to Wisse's unease.

Wisse's relentless defensiveness in regard to criticism of Israel, from within or from without, is the consequence of a basic misrepresentation of the character of Arab hostility toward Israel. Again and again she insists on a seamless continuity between European anti-Semitism and

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the Arab hatred of the Jewish state. "The Arab charge that the creation of Israel is a crime against an Arab people has much in common with the earlier Christian charge that Jews denied the Son of God, or that of the Nazis that Jews polluted the Aryan race." Later, even the slight hint of qualification in this assertion disappears: "The organization of Arab nationalism around the negative image of the Jew owes everything to German precedent, and even takes Nazi ideology one step further."

It is indisputable that the Arabs have repeatedly used anti-Semitic ideas as propaganda weapons, and the frequent publication in Arabic of such tracts as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* has made European anti-Semitic prejudice a potent reinforcer of hostility to the Jewish state among Arab populations. The root of the hostility, however, is not anti-Semitism, as Wisse imagines. The historian Gavin Langmuir has helpfully suggested a definition of anti-Semitism that distinguishes it from other kinds of hostility toward Jews: anti-Semitism, he says, flows from a set of demonizing fantasies about the Jews, not from any observable behavior on their part. Thus, the Jews are feared and hated because they profane the host, drink the blood of Christian children, conspire to dominate the entire world, pollute the pure gene-pool of the Aryan race.

Some Arabs no doubt have come to entertain some of these fantasies, but that is decidedly not the root of Arab opposition to Israel, which depends instead on observed behavior of the Jews. That is, the Jews really did enter a geographical space where formerly they had been a small and vulnerable minority; they really did acquire land, create settlements, build up concentrations of population, and steadily fashion the instruments of national sovereignty in a country the Arabs had thought of as indigenously Arab, and which, with the rise of Arab nationalism after World War I, they began to consider Arab in a politically loaded way. I am not in the least conceding that all this constitutes a "crime" against the Arabs. And yet one can readily understand how, from their standpoint, even without the distorting motive of propaganda, they would see it that way. The Israeli-Arab conflict is a conflict of two peoples over one land. No doubt there are many Arabs who would be happy if they had the capacity to wipe out the entire Jewish population of Israel—much of their leadership has been forced, fortunately, to recognize that this is not a realistic aim—but they have dreamed of doing this because they want the land, not because they are obsessed with fantasies about the Jews.

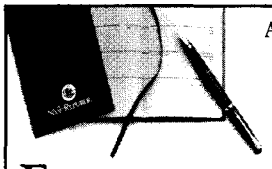
It is true that, popular notions of a traditional Arab-Jewish symbiosis notwithstanding, the history of Arab-Jewish relations, as far back as the Muslim conquest, was marked by conflict. The Jews were resented as a people that had rejected the truth of Islam and despised as a subject nation. Still, there is scant indication that the Jews were the object of a collective obsession, as they became in the orbit of Christianity. The contemporary Arab adoption of European anti-Semitic symbols is cynical and harmful, but it does not arise naturally from the matrix of Arab cultural identity.

The distinction that I am drawing addresses itself to the political context of the hostility, not to the possible degree of fervent hatred in the individual adversary. Hamid the Hamas terrorist wielding his assassin's knife may be animated by just as much rage as Ivan of the Black Hundreds wielding his ax, but for Ivan and his peers the Jews were eternal objects of mayhem as deicides and imbibers of Christian blood, whereas the constellation of forces of which Hamid is a more or less unwitting part is dominated by concerns other than ancient hatred. For this reason, Arab leaders may actually conclude that politically it may pay to come to terms with the Jewish adversary, as Anwar Sadat did in 1977. In Wisse's view, however, Arab hatred of Israel stands beyond the flow of historical change, like all mythopoeic anti-Semitism. No political compromise is envisaged, and any concession of a perceived wrong done to the Arabs is merely an act of complicity with their homicidal hostility.

Curiously, as Shapira shows, the founders of the Zionist community in Palestine early in the century also insisted on seeing Arab hostility toward them in terms of European anti-Semitism. From a brawl between Arabs and Jews on Purim 1908 through the riots of 1921 and 1929, the descriptive term "pogrom" was frequently invoked, and coverage in the Hebrew press of the ghastly massacre in Hebron in 1929 abundantly played on memories of the massacre in Kishinev in 1903. There were two disparate motives for this mislabeling. On the one hand, it provided a warrant for having as little to do with the Arabs as possible: "If Arabs hate us," Shapira summarizes the line of reasoning, "this is not a result of our own actions, it is a decree of fate, the product of the eternal hatred of the world for the eternal people; there is no sense in trying to befriend them." This, of course, is precisely what Wisse still contends in the 1990s, thus envisaging, even after the fact of Jewish national sovereignty, no possibility except an unending state of siege for an eternally threatened Israel.

But the more powerful motive for the early Zionist predisposition to see Arab hostility as anti-Semitism was that it was also a way of not seeing that the Arabs, like the Jews, were a group with an emerging national consciousness, and that their violent resistance to the Zionists, even their hatred of them, might be actuated by national self-interest. For if the founding fathers of Zionism had recognized a nationalist impulse in Arab actions, they would have had to face a prospect that few of them in their idealism were ready to confront: that the fulfillment of Zionism meant not only draining swamps and irrigating deserts, but also war.

Indeed, by the time of the Arab Rebellion of 1936, in which many more Jews were killed than in any of the previous onslaughts, it had become clear from the relatively disciplined national character of the attacks, and from the strike that followed them, that the European model of anti-Semitism did not adequately explain what was happening. People no longer spoke of *pera'ot,* or "pogroms," but rather of *me'ora'ot,* or "disturbances," or more literally "events," as in the political sense of the French *événements.* Long



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before 1936 one of the first to see quite lucidly that the strife with the Arabs was a national conflict that must lead to armed struggle was Vladimir Jabotinsky, the founder of the right-wing Revisionists. Though Jabotinsky created a movement animated by a militaristic ethos, he approached the inevitability of conflict in coolly rational terms, and he did not promote a mystique of violence. The same could not be said for many of his associates.

If a moral inference may be drawn from the historical evidence about the Zionist recourse to force, it is that even the historically necessary is not beyond criticism. It was necessary for the Jews of Palestine to realize that they were confronted not by anti-Semitic hooligans, but by a violent national adversary who obliged them to develop their own concerted means of national defense. And it has been necessary for Israel to maintain, through four-and-a-half decades, constant military vigilance against a constellation of Arab powers that would, if it could, destroy the Jewish state. But force, even when it is indispensable, can also be abused, as Shapira's study makes clear, especially at the level of ideology, which is her principal subject.

A particularly instructive case is the affinity that Shapira demonstrates between the right-wing extremist poet Uri Zvi Greenberg and many of the Labor leaders of the '20s and '30s. Greenberg, who moved from an initial association with Labor to the Revisionist camp (and who, when he was not merely ranting, produced poetry of a high order), celebrated the mythic idea of the redemption of the soil of Israel through blood, condemned Arabs and Christian Europeans alike in frankly racist terms, and pilloried every act of Jewish moderation as cowardly treason. All this, strangely, touched a chord in the Labor leadership:

> As individuals who felt they bore the burden of responsibility for the fate of the nation, the state of emergency that they assumed the Jewish people was facing gave them the right to cast aside the rules of conventional morality, rules that under normal conditions they would have been careful to adhere to. Hence, they did not regard Greenberg's eruptive violence as a deviation from their own basic cast of mind and psyche.

This is but one of many ways in which right and left have joined hidden hands. In the early 1940s Yitzhak Tabenkin, the leader of the Socialist Ahdut ha-Avodah, discovered a cherished model of violent activism in Joseph Stalin, and imagined that the Russian "transfer" of whole populations of Tatars and Volga Germans was a valuable precedent for how the Zionists could resolve their own conflict with the Arabs of Palestine. Today, of course, that "leftist" idea has become the program of extremist splinter parties of the right. For better and for worse, ideas have consequences in the political realm. The Irgunists who perpetrated the massacre of Deir Yassin in 1948 were nurtured on the fiery verse of Greenberg. Tabenkin's Stalinist thinking on the transfer of populations was not irrelevant to the instances of forced expulsion of Arab villagers—how prevalent these were is a matter of historical debate—in 1948-49 and, on occasion, later. I am not suggesting that there is a moral symmetry between the two sides of the Arab-Israeli conflict in attitude or in action, but I think that we must strenuously resist the assumption that every act of coercion or violence of Israeli against Arab is either a sheer fabrication or a sacred necessity, and hence that all criticism of Israel is an abject surrender to Arab propaganda.

Politics is a sphere in which one has to consider constantly shifting alternatives, and to cultivate a capacity for flexible responses to new circumstances. What makes Wisse's notion of how to defend Israel thoroughly untenable is that it is based on a frozen view of history, on a denial of the possibility of change: Chmelnitski, Hitler, and Arafat all represent the same eternal hatred. Wisse's analysis amounts to a series of rigid either-or formulations. Jews, she argues, have been unwilling to confront the virulence of immemorial anti-Semitism because "it would have meant trading in the eschatological optimism of the messianic dream for the political pragmatism of defending against extinction." Indeed, so eager is her desire to see a neatly ubiquitous opposition between liberalism and Jewish loyalty that she allows herself to state flatly that "anti-Semitism could never succeed without the collusion of liberal democracies," managing to forget for the moment that the most lethal anti-Semitism ever fostered by the state attained its peak achievements under the totalitarian regimes of Hitler and Stalin, and was destroyed by the liberal democracies. What is more, the Jews of the West have been spectacular beneficiaries of liberalism in their enjoyment of civil rights, economic and social opportunities, and the exercise of free expression. The suggestion that liberalism is the perfect soil for the flourishing of anti-Semitism is perverse.

And the notion that liberals are too naive and too craven to acknowledge the presence of illiberalism in their midst is equally perverse. Are there really no liberal Jews who have faced the realities of anti-Semitism? Are all liberals really starry-eyed messianists? (Is not liberalism the very antithesis of messianism?) Might not an Israeli political pragmatism be prudently guided by the perception that the Arab threat with which it must contend is not at bottom anti-Semitic, however shamelessly the anti-Semitic lexicon may be exploited?

One of the most heroic aspirations of Zionism was "normalization," the attempt to establish a radically new orientation of the Jewish people toward history. Normalization has not fared as well in all respects as the founders of Zionism hoped, largely because the majority of the Jewish people remain attached to life in the Diaspora (as they have done ever since the Babylonian Exile); Israel has become the geopolitical center of a nation in which only a minority of the people reside. But the slogan of normalization was intended to address, above all, the pathological aspects of Diaspora life. If Jewish existence in Europe, for all its cultural and economic efflorescences, was punctuated by humiliation, extortion, expulsion, forced conversion, massacre, and actual genocide, it is hardly surprising that many Jews should have come to perceive the world of the gentile in constant fearfulness: every snarling dog seemed ready to sink teeth in Jews' flesh, every unheralded rap at the door might be the pogromist's fist. To reverse the old saw, even someone who has enemies may be paranoid.

The pioneers of Zionism wanted to escape precisely this paranoia by taking control of their own destiny under the

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JOHN UPDIKE

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conditions of national autonomy enjoyed by other peoples. To a very large extent, they and their heirs succeeded, as one can vividly sense in the mentality of Israeli schoolkids, the tenor of conversation in a street café in Tel Aviv, the feeling at a Saturday afternoon soccer match, the confident professionalism of the Israeli army. It would be a mean irony if the defense of Israel, of this marvelously "normal" polity of the Jews, were undertaken not out of a clear vision of the real political world around it, but out of the brooding fear projected from the darkest shadows of national memory. To assume that the Jews are confronted with an eternal and inevitable enmity, an enmity so implacable in character that it silences all self-criticism and all compromise, is to revert precisely to the paranoid imagination that Zionism sought to overcome. •

The Voyage Out

By James Hamilton-Paterson

Imagining the Pacific: In the Wake of the Cook Voyages by Bernard Smith

(Yale University Press, 262 pp., $70)

The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking in the Pacific by Gananath Obeyesekere

(Princeton University Press, 251 pp., $24.95)

Captain Cook's three great voyages between 1768 and 1779 were, in a sense, a pure expression of the Enlightenment. The bad old days of Cortes and Pizarro, when Europeans had ravaged the New World in quest of booty, had been consciously abandoned with a shudder. On his first voyage in the *Endeavor,* Cook sailed with the *Hints* of Lord Morton, the president of the Royal Society, which was sponsoring the expedition. These read, in part:

> Have it still in view that shedding the blood of these people is a crime of the highest nature:—They are human creatures, the work of the same omnipotent Author, equally under his care with the most polished European.... Therefore should they in a hostile manner oppose a landing, and kill some men in the attempt, even this would hardly justify firing among them, till every other gentle method had been tried.

That Cook was destined to die eleven years later in a skirmish that saw British sailors firing into a crowd of Hawaiians was thus ironic, and doubly so since his death was widely greeted throughout the academies of Europe as his apotheosis. By then the achievements of his travels were recognized as prodigious, and were changing the entire way in which Europe viewed the world. Indeed, this was literally true: the visual records that Cook brought back together constituted a new model for the pictorial representation of the non-European world.

If Cook's three voyages were to be roughly characterized, they might be called, respectively, botanical, meteorological, and ethnographic. They were avowedly scientific, but behind such immediate objectives lay broader purposes, chief among which were to "show the flag" for European civilization and to establish the sort of relations with the native inhabitants of the South Seas that could lead to amicable trade links. From our postimperialist age, seething as we are with contrition and political correctitude, we have to guard against being too knowing about this, against taking it for a sinister plot, for exploitation merely disguised and euphemized.

At the time that Cook sailed, the modern concept of race had not yet formed. Although practice might be less than scrupulous, prevailing theory held that all men, being members of the great human family, partook of its essential nobility. And where trade was concerned, the year 1776, when Cook left on his last and fatal voyage, saw the publication of Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations.* It fell to Cook, in carrying the blessings and advantages of civilized Europe, to open up nearly a third of the world to the concept of a peaceful, free market trading economy.

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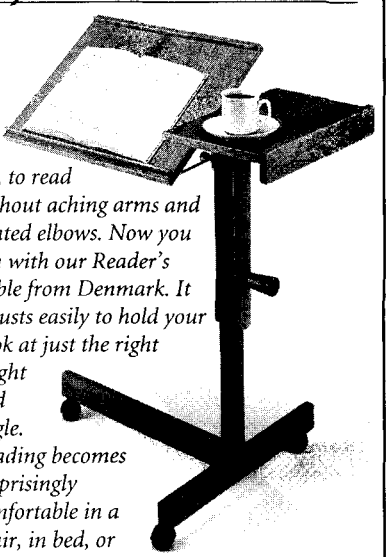

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Again, that was the theory.

Among the Royal Society's most enlightened and far-reaching decisions was that each voyage should carry professional artists to make a record of the scientific specimens, landscapes, and people. Nowadays, when the lens seems ubiquitously to have replaced the eye (and the intelligence), this might seem unremarkable. In fact, what was extraordinary was that after centuries of exploration these were the first expeditions ever to have attempted a thoroughgoing visual record. The reason for this was not so much indifference as the lack of a suitable artistic tradition.

Paradoxically, the mind precedes vision: a thing needs to be understood or imagined before it can be seen. In the prevailing tradition of classical naturalism, there was no way of representing alien landscapes and people with the objectivity that the new sciences demanded. This was particularly true of people, where it was possible to depict stereotypes (Moors, slaves, Three Wise Men) but not genuine individuality within an ethnic type. The time had not yet arrived, as it would after the French Revolution and Darwin, when empirical naturalism took over and the representation of "natives" often tended toward the frankly simian. Thus Cook's artists were set an impossible conundrum: how to make existing European art and iconography describe non-European things.

Their answer was virtually to invent a new and powerful aesthetic. Bernard Smith's contention is that the artwork of Cook's voyages, hitherto largely ignored by art historians, marks the beginning of a complete change of tradition in Europe. It profoundly influenced not just ways of looking at the South Seas (a vision whose balmy allure was eventually to attract lotos-seekers such as Stevenson, Melville, Loti, and Gauguin) but subsequent attitudes toward race, and hence toward ethnography and anthropology. It is in many ways a ravishing book, full of wonderful paintings that constitute a cross-section of the artwork of these momentous voyages.

Smith's cogent text is particularly revealing about that strange, liminal moment when the old tradition gives way to the new, when the sudden growth in the natural sciences as well as in navigation, cartography, and military topography in the mid-eighteenth century "challenged and eventually destroyed the ordered hierarchy of academic art." Thus William Hodges on the second voyage clearly foreshadowed the naturalism of Constable and Turner, especially in his plein-air oil sketches. Indeed, Hodges's attention to tropical skies, the careful observation of clouds, shadows, and the effects of light and wind on the ocean pre-empt Constable in their meteorological accuracy, as does his invention of a device for rendering highlights on foliage, which fifty years later became known as "Constable's snow." Hodges also found color in shadows, a discovery that has been conventionally attributed to the Impressionists.

HEAD OF A POLYNESIAN MAN
BY WILLIAM HODGES, C. 1774-5

The necessary format of Smith's book is the only thing it shares with the hideous genre of the coffee-table book. The pictures themselves are a revelation and, more than 200 years after they were painted, one can read in them the intellectual excitement of artists aware of changing with their every brush stroke the way the world would thereafter be seen. (An elegant, scholarly text faithfully captures this excitement.) Few looking at these remarkable pictures would think Hodges as great an artist as Constable, but they might say—if they could swallow their ethnocentrism—that he was sometimes a good deal more interesting. Dedham Vale is one thing; but dawn off a tropic coast (which most Europeans have never seen) is visual splendor of a different order, neither better nor worse but truly different, with tonal and atmospheric subtleties that Constable could never have imagined. And there's the difficulty: European art historians and viewing public alike have seldom been much smitten by non-European landscapes, preferring not to venture much beyond the nearest of the Near East in the safe company of men like David Roberts and Edward Lear, so these paintings from the South Seas remain widely unacknowledged.

The influence of Cook's artists on what came later was profound. They shaped the way in which other artists could view the larger world, and they shaped attitudes toward an area of the globe that quickly took on some of the attributes of an edenic dream. As with all paradises there was, of course, a snakier side. Not only was Cook stabbed to death by a Hawaiian, but Tobias Furneaux, a captain on the first voyage, lost eight of his men to Maoris at Grass Cove, where they were killed and eaten. Since Cook's death, which was immediately presented as being hardly distinguishable from martyrdom, there has been a tendency to ignore or to gloss the captain's own snakier side because it sits unhappily with the official myth.

Just as the popular notion of "the South Seas" presented a flawed idyll, so two distinct versions of their "discoverer" have come down to us, corresponding to what Gananath Obeyesekere calls his "Prospero and Kurtz" aspects. On the one hand there is Fanny Burney's portrait, according absolutely with the personification of the Enlightenment that Cook had become: "The most moderate, humane, and gentle circumnavigator that ever went out upon discoveries." On the other, there is the short-tempered despot who flogged 20 percent, 26 percent, and 37 percent of his crews respectively on his three voyages. (Even Bligh on the *Bounty* flogged a mere 13 percent.)

For whatever psychic or circumstantial reasons, Cook's behavior unquestionably

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did deteriorate over the eleven years, his temper tantrums mirrored by increasing harshness toward his own men and by a punitive obsession with theft by the islanders. Coming from a society where, Enlightenment or no Enlightenment, a man might still be hanged for stealing, Cook never did come to terms with the Polynesians' inability or refusal to distinguish between *meum* and *tuum*. By his last voyage, natives caught stealing trifles (a coil of rope, a handful of nails) were subjected to horrendous floggings and mutilations or, if ashore, had their huts and canoes burned.

This escalated to the point where, the day before his death, this moderate and gentle circumnavigator was to be seen in the grip of hysterical rage, running the wrong way along the Hawaiian foreshore in pursuit of a missing pair of armorer's tongs and a chisel while the locals laughed at him. His ship's surgeon, William Ellis, noted, "There seems to be a degree of infatuation attending him, which rendered him deaf to everything!" The next day Cook took the Hawaiian king hostage, and a chief of the first rank was accidentally killed. The captain and his shore party were surrounded by several thousand islanders, and in the ensuing melee he was stabbed from behind. Versions of this incident are themselves in some conflict, variously bald and slanted so as to produce a hero's death or at least a meaningfully tragic tableau. The heroic reading won hands down, and this was the version agreed to even by the earliest Hawaiian historians, who were much influenced by the first nineteenth-century missionaries. It was Cook's apotheosis.

The immediate process had begun a month earlier, with his deification. When he first landed in Hawaii during the religious festival of Makahiki, he was hailed as the returning god Lono. "This is fact," Obeyesekere laconically remarks, "and it is incorporated into practically every biography, novel, or account of this redoubtable man." He promptly proceeds to undermine its status as "fact" by questioning what the Hawaiians might have meant by calling Cook "Lono," for this is crucial. Obeyesekere suggests that the captain's respectful reception was no more than would courteously have been extended to any visiting great chief. There is every reason to suppose, moreover, that the islanders were perfectly able to tell the difference between a man and a god, no matter how alien his appearance.

Obeyesekere's thesis is that such subtle distinctions were steamrollered by the instant interpretation that all Europeans must have seemed like gods to these natives, a captain especially, thereby establishing a Eurocentric topos of superiority that could validate later attitudes of patronage, seen at their most grotesque in India and Africa. "To put it bluntly," he writes, "I doubt that the natives created their European god; the Europeans created him for them. This 'European god' is a myth of conquest, imperialism, and civilization—a triad which cannot be easily separated." Thus he reinterprets, one by one, the familiar ingredients of that fateful Makahiki ceremony: Cook's prostrating himself before the image of Ku, his being hailed as a god, his men's sacrilegious taking of the wooden railing and idols for their galley stoves.

Obeyesekere's alternative, indeed subversive, re-reading of the Cook myth gradually takes on greater weight. His technique is not to adduce new evidence, but to question the standpoint of the narrators themselves. No doubt his own Sri Lankan origins would anyway enable him to cast a particularly jaundiced eye on the received version of this entirely European story; but the ostensible motive of his book seems to be a heated desire to refute Marshall Sahlins's version—and reification—of Cook's apotheosis. Obeyesekere, who teaches anthropology at Princeton, is not unsympathetic to Sahlins's structural theory of history, but it was "the illustrative example" (in a lecture on Cook that Sahlins gave in 1987) "which provoked my ire."

One advantage of his non-European scrutiny of the Cook myth is that it tends to support the sort of objections to the myth that one might raise oneself—not as any sort of ethnographer, but merely as a thoughtful traveler. Foremost among these is the question of understanding a foreign language, let alone an alien culture. He raises this over the specific issue of what the Hawaiians meant by calling Cook "Lono," though is disinclined to flesh it out to the point where the language barrier might well be seen to lie at the root of practically all Cook's problems with the islanders. Yet travelers know that the problem of language looms quite as opaquely between themselves and the locals as does their culturally determined inability to "see" difference.

Conceptual problems are also linguistic problems, and vice versa, as Baron Van den Steinen made clear in the 1890s when he reported the Bororo Indians of Central Brazil as declaring that they were red parakeets. (And how reliable *really* was Evans-Pritchard's grasp of Zande and Nuer? Or Lévi-Strauss's Kadiweu? Given that as a native Englishman I cannot always understand every-

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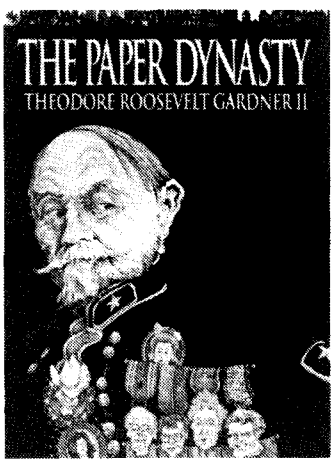

SHE DIDN'T WRITE THIS ONE

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thing my own countrymen say or infallibly judge the subcultural weight of what they mean.) Omai, Cook's interpreter, was a Tahitian, and neither the captain nor any of his officers spoke more than a smattering of the Hawaiians' dialect. One can make a pretty shrewd guess as to the extent of their ability. A few dozen basic nouns, mostly concerning victuals, boats, and weapons; some equally basic adjectives; an honorific or two for dealing with kings, priests, and headmen; and nary a properly conjugated verb anywhere.

Even today travelers may be humiliated to discover how hard it is to rid themselves of an inherited notion that only their own culture is truly capable of irony. Their "take" on what people say to them (as it might be in some Far Eastern hinterland) is as earnest and deadpan as that of any anthropologist trying to do fieldwork. Beginners in a language or culture are obliged to be deadpan as they struggle to assign meaning, to impose a narrative on words and actions streaming hectically past, carrying away their dire import. It takes them time and familiarity to learn that what is being said is as frequently ironic as their own private asides, ranging from more or less adroit verbal play to something altogether more caustic. Slightly ashamed, they realize that these people, too, might call a dawdler "Lightning" or refer to a self-important nobody as "His Eminence."

Thus a mixture of ingrained notions and ignorance makes it easy to patronize a people's jocular skill with their own language, to take it and their customs at face value. Since "Lono" was the name of a Hawaiian god, historians have felt safe in assuming, as did Cook's crew and contemporaries, that when the natives called him "Lono" and showed him respect it had to mean that they took him for the personification of their god. A traveler remains skeptical. Obeyesekere might well have asked (but doesn't) whether an anthropologist like Sahlins had ever, years ago, heard his schoolmates refer to the chaplain as "Jesus," like many a mocking schoolboy before and since. And recalling this, whether he might wonder what an earnest Polynesian anthropologist speaking almost no English might have made of it.

Obeyesekere is too savvy, of course, to accuse those who seem unquestioningly to support the official version of Cook's apotheosis of being unimaginative or ethnocentric, but the implication ebulliently underwrites his entire book. There are so many ways of patronizing the past, he as good as says, and one of them is to accept your own culture's version of it. For this reason alone, his book would be stimulating. But there is more, much of it centering around the personality of James Cook himself. That familiar, Queegish figure of a ship's master obsessed with theft, increasingly unhinged by whatever private ghosts—almost a myth in itself—is surely worth examining.

As the author himself admits, not enough is known about Cook's childhood to permit anything approaching a retrospective psychoanalysis, but certain aspects of his behavior can bear a more psychological scrutiny than they are usually accorded. What, for instance, was the captain's relationship with food, and what did it mean to deny his crews both food and liberty when that was not only unnecessary but counterproductive in terms of morale and efficiency? (Far from thinking of their British visitors as gods, the Hawaiians were amazed by these thin, ragged men's obsession with eating. The crews were, indeed, half starved.) Obeyesekere does not think that this was simply a case of a captain losing contact with his men out of forgetfulness; nor, judging from their near-mutinous reactions, did they:

> Their actions expressed the petulance of children toward a father who is both a disciplinarian and a giver (even if rarely) of love. The father is in turn angry at the children's rebellion; he withholds grog, a powerful source of physical and psychic solace which helps one to forget the rigors of shipboard life, to dull its pains. Those who have had their fill become satiated with it; they get "groggy" and go to sleep. Grog is the milk of the father.

This makes one look forward to Obeyesekere's promised biography of Cook. Meanwhile, his present book has an interim feel to it, like the work of someone hotly staking out his claim, a thorny and promising clearing with a good view of the Sahlinsite camp across a swift and forbidding river. It may or may not be too late to redress the imbalance of the Cook myth; but if there is a way of doing so, it must surely start by examining the man himself rather than by casting aspersions on the motives of those who sent him, which were by any standards enlightened.

What did go wrong on that last voyage? The disaster, according to Obeyesekere, was mostly due to Cook's increasing ill-health and underlying personality disorder. Smith, although he doesn't address himself at length to anything as specific as Cook the man, does have a persuasive theory that he became both tired and radically depressed. By the third voyage, long experience had shown him the inherent contradiction between what was expected of him by the philosophers of the Enlightenment and the realities of the South Seas:

> He had come to the Pacific to spread the blessings and advantages of civilized Europe. What the locals most wanted was the ironware that for so many centuries had made Europe powerful; what Cook's young sailors wanted even more than they wanted fresh food was the bodies of native women.

By this last voyage the captain could see the effects on the islanders of the syphilis he had previously imported. Disillusionment set in. "For what Adam Smith's free market economy offered the South Seas was not really the difference between civilization and savagery but the difference between exploitation and extermination." Cook perceived this all too well; and it was an irony that would not have been misplaced in a classical tragedy that it was the very nails and chisels he had brought to help establish a free market trading economy that, melted down, formed the crude dagger the Hawaiians used to kill him.

Others of Cook's crew had remarked the same contradictions. On the previous voyage George Forster had already made his own famous assessment:

> It is much to be lamented that the voyages of Europeans cannot be performed without being fatal to the nations whom they visit. . . . If the knowledge of a few individuals can only be acquired at such a price as the happiness of nations, it were better for the discoverers and the discovered, that the South Seas had still remained unknown to Europe and its restless inhabitants.

Full of pity, this is a humane and bleak pronouncement. Smith is engagingly urbane: "We have been advised by economists that there is no such thing as a free lunch; from the Greek experience in the Indian Ocean and Cook's experience in the Pacific, we might want to conclude that there is no such thing as a free market either."

So what, finally, did these three voyages amount to? Many things, most of them contradictory, including at the same time an apotheosis and a tragedy, a prodigious aesthetic and scientific leap for Europe and the beginning of the end for "unspoilt" Polynesia. However inventive Obeyesekere is in his subversion of

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the apotheosis myth, it is inevitably Smith who provides a wider and, oddly enough, glummer view of where the true snakiness of Cook's voyages lay. Because it deals with questions of imaging and imagination, it leaves one to wonder if, badly as Europeans have fared in their clumsy and variously intentioned efforts to contact other races, anybody else would have done much better.

Sooner or later widely different cultures are doomed to meet; and for all sorts of complex reasons, many of them quite unconscious, horrid acts will be performed and curious fables concocted in order to deal with the hitherto unimagined. Both authors refer to Edward Said's concept of Orientalism as a cognate example of how the West devised a character for the East in an effort to grasp it intellectually, visually, and economically. Since, by an accident of history, it is the West that has played the major role in expropriating most of the descriptions—as once the territory—of the modern world, such concepts are useful. Still, it is worth asking whether, had the boot been on the other foot, with a well-funded Polynesian expeditionary force sent to investigate the backward natives of Europe a hemisphere away, their resultant mythmaking would have been any less vainglorious, their meddling any less fatal, their misconstructions any less profound. (As it is, they were hardly innocent stay-at-homes, as their outward spread through the South Pacific and skillfully perfected war canoes testified.)

Such fancies apart, there could well be—and perhaps there is—an Eastern thesis called Occidentalism to describe, say, Chinese and Japanese attitudes toward the West. To be a thoughtful traveler is to discover that what we now call racism or ethnocentrism is universal, if only because one culture can scarcely "see" another without distortion. In its gentlest manifestation, this cultural predisposition that everybody shares can be touchingly seen in John Webber's sincere and largely successful efforts on Cook's third voyage not to make his sketches of Polynesians look like caricatures of Europeans. A century and a half later, Chiang Yee's representations of the Lake District in *The Silent Traveller* still, just as touchingly, make Derwentwater look Chinese.

If the art of the voyages was a triumph, we can readily admit Cook's personal failings even as our conviction grows that the human being could never exist who would be his own culture's ideal standard-bearer. Regardless of their nationality, we ought to have no confidence in the hopefully "wiser" behavior of our descendants if, should they ever land on Sirius IV, the autochthons turn out to be sexually attractive and the planet awash with platinum. Still less might we expect them to take enough time off from peering through the viewfinders of their recording devices to found an entirely fresh aesthetic.

JAMES HAMILTON-PATERSON is the author most recently of *The Great Deep: The Sea and Its Thresholds* (Random House).

Innocent Abroad

BY ERNEST GELLNER

The Future of Liberal Revolution by Bruce Ackerman

(Yale University Press, 152 pp., $18.50)

The Germans are clever, fiendishly clever. Early this century they realized that they had a neighbor to the east that, in population and in resources, was liable to outstrip them. The neighbor's industrial base was developing fast, and it was necessary to destroy, or at least to weaken, the potential challenger before he became too strong. Thus a war was in due course arranged. The war did not go quite as well as intended, so another plan for destroying the eastern menace was devised. A dangerous revolutionary, who might well destabilize (as the phrase now goes) the dangerous neighbor, was living in Switzerland. He did not really expect his revolutionary designs to find fulfillment in his own lifetime, but he was not averse to giving it a try if offered the opportunity. The Germans were sufficiently respectful of his revolutionary potential to want to avoid contamination themselves; when they arranged for his transport to the east, they made sure that he crossed Germany in a sealed train. And so he did, eventually reaching Russia via Finland. It is all by now a familiar story.

But only recently has it become obvious how perfectly the fiendish plan eventually worked. The revolutionary in question succeeded in imposing his ideas on Russia, and thanks to those ideas Russia is now prostrate, no longer a threat to Germany. The prize that had eluded Teutonic, Polish, Swedish, Napoleonic, and Hitlerian invaders fell, at virtually no cost to those who devised the plan, to whoever it was who sent Lenin to the city that no longer bears his name. It shows that in politics a little bit of cunning goes much further than a great deal of force.

Of course, the plan did not work quite as fast as originally intended. Those who devised it were denied the satisfaction of actually seeing its amazing success. It took too long for that. In fact, for quite a time the plan looked as though it would prove counterproductive: the regime set up by the revolutionary actually turned Russia into a superpower that temporarily turned much of Germany into a dependency. But that was only temporary. In the end, the virus worked only too effectively, and the seemingly strong giant crumbled. There was no need for even the slightest push. The collapse came from the inside, the result of a long and deadly disease, deliberately introduced all those years ago.

Bruce Ackerman's book is one of many efforts to make sense of the events that came to a head in 1989 and 1991: the dismantling of the Bolshevik empire. It is a kind of polemic with Francis Fukuyama and the End of History thesis (though Ackerman simplifies that thesis in crediting Fukuyama only with the view that mankind now has no option other than consumerism, and ignoring his other argument that liberalism satisfies also a different need, namely the craving for recognition). Ackerman claims that we are seeing not an end, but a glorious dawn, though there is a danger that the dawn may not be exploited as well as it should be. His book's mission is to point out the right direction, and to warn of the dangers.

Why can't a woman be more like a man? So Henry Higgins demanded to know. Why can't these Russians and Eastern Europeans be more like Americans? So Ackerman demands to know. He recommends the kind of constitutional development that has worked well in America. The model is the Constitutional Convention of 1787. Yeltsin is urged to take a similar path. Ackerman is not impressed by the arguments against devoting so much energy to formal con-

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stitutional problems in the middle of the present crisis. Israel is criticized for failing to grasp the constitutional nettle during those early and difficult years of its history, and following instead the British model of parliamentary sovereignty. Germany, on the other hand, went or was impelled to go the right way during the postwar period.

In the abstract, this argument may or may not be correct. It is difficult to disagree with Ackerman's views as a blueprint for what would be desirable, were it feasible. If Russia and the other successor states of the Bolshevik empire could draw up a system of basic or constitutional law *and* respect such a system *and* observe it, they would no doubt be out of the woods. But as far as I can see, this would be a symptom rather than a cause of their salvation. Ackerman is a constitutional lawyer and an American, and he sees salvation in the implantation of something resembling the American Constitution; in the end he argues as if society were made by law and lawyers. Could it not be the other way around?

What this book really lacks is a sufficiently acute sense of the difference between the present situation in ex-Communist Europe and earlier revolutions elsewhere, above all the American Revolution. Ackerman is eager to reverse the tendency of Marxists to monopolize the notion of "revolution": we liberals have revolutions too, he insists, and they can be fun, especially because, when the convulsion is all over, we liberals turn to legal conflict and not to physical strife. (It is a great shame that it all went wrong in France.) It sounds as if Ackerman relishes a good clean legal fight, and thinks that everyone is much the better for it.

But Ackerman is wrong, not in appropriating the term "revolution" for nonmessianic, restrained, and liberal political renovations, but in attributing it to what happened in the collapse of Marxism. That was a collapse initiated from above, under unique circumstances. The American Revolution was a self-affirmation of a vigorous civil society, and of its moral intuitions. The collapse of Bolshevism, by contrast, was not a proper revolution at all. It was an unplanned consequence of an act of despair on the part of those who had destroyed civil society, who had come to miss it and to see that what they had erected was intolerable. The difference between the two situations is tremendous.

What does provide some little support for Ackerman's argument is that many Russian and Eastern European intellectuals do indeed yearn for civil society. As he puts it, "Their experience with Communist tyranny has impressed upon them the supreme value of the rule of law and personal freedom." The code expression for this during the early years of perestroika was "pan-human values," which was a way of repudiating the previous argument that class values—those of the proletariat as the universal class destined to bring and embody human liberation—trump merely formal, spurious procedural principles such as the rule of law. But there is an enormous difference between longing for civil society (which is indeed a hopeful sign, and distinguishes the post-Communist world from some other illiberal zones of the world) and being able to take it for granted, which was the American condition.

For all its horror, Marxism did, in a sense, construct a moral order: a system in which the command structure was linked to an overall background picture of the world that was understood, or partially endorsed, or accepted as inevitable, by many. People knew what the rules were and how to play by them. There was a system to which they could relate, which made some sense, and which in the past had attracted bona fide adherence from at least some people. The collapse of that system, therefore, has left a moral vacuum. In a world in which the two effective principles of legitimacy are economic growth and cultural homogeneity, it has led to economic collapse and ethnic conflict. The situation has all the features that accompanied the collapse of the Hapsburg and Hohenzollern empires: confiscation of savings by inflation; economic crisis; rising criminality; national humiliation for the erstwhile dominant cultural group and its relegation in many places to the status of disadvantaged minority; proliferation of new, weak, opportunist, and inexperienced states invoking the national principle but haunted by very large and discontented minorities; the sight of rapidly and dubiously acquired wealth in the hands of unworthy and illegitimate opportunists. All these features, which had led to catastrophe in the Europe of the 1930s and 1940s, are conspicuously present.

I am not saying that history repeats itself with precision, or at all. I mean only that the danger is indisputably present. The American Revolution, by contrast, with its absence of violent conflict among the victors, was *not* a collapse of a moral order. The moral order remained intact, and the revolution was its expression, not its violation.

Of course, there are also signs that allow a measure of optimism. The striking fact about the ex-USSR is not the amount of violence but, relatively speaking, the lack of it. So far, the Soviet pattern has not been the Yugoslav one. But it is one thing to refuse dogmatic pessimism, and another to believe that a situation in which civil society has disappeared is amenable to the immediate application of precedents drawn from a world in which civil society not only never collapsed, but was exceptionally vigorous. In the end, the problem doesn't lie in Ackerman's values and the proposals that they inspire. Who would fault them? It lies rather in his failure to give due weight to the difficulties of the situation that those proposals are intended to remedy.

ERNEST GELLNER is the author most recently of *Reason and Culture* (Blackwells) and *Postmodernism, Reason, and Religion* (Routledge).

Roll Over Liszt

BY TIM PAGE

Horowitz: The Life and Music by Harold C. Schonberg

(Simon and Schuster, 427 pp., $27.50)

One slow Sunday afternoon in 1986, I finished filing a long article scheduled to run in the next morning's *New York Times*. My editor read the story, approved it, and sent me home. Then she urgently called me back from the elevator and, visibly frustrated, told me that she had received "orders from on high." My piece had lost its prominent place on the culture page, and it would have to be cut to 100 words if it were to run at all. Knowing the exigencies of daily journalism, I accepted my fate, but wondered just what had happened to push the piece out. A major discovery? A looming strike? A genius dead? Nothing of the sort, she muttered disgustedly. "Vladimir Horowitz burped in Moscow."

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The offending dispatch wasn't quite that trivial, as I recall, but everything Horowitz did was reported as news, and this was only the latest in a seemingly endless string of articles that we had run about the pianist's return to his native country. His decision to make the trip had landed on the front page, and not just at the *Times*. There were follow-up stories about the negotiations for the tour, about the transportation of his own special Steinway. And of course there had been thorough coverage of his first concert, at the Moscow Conservatory, which was also telecast throughout the world.

But let Harold C. Schonberg, who starts his biography of the pianist with that occasion, tell the tale:

> On April 20, 1986, the wheel came full circle for Vladimir Horowitz with an audible click, and he recognized it as such. His life, as he later said, was "now completely rounded out." The man generally considered the world's greatest pianist, the archetype of Romanticism, the most electrifying pianist of his time, the last great direct descendant of the old Russian school of piano playing, the virtuoso supreme, on that date appeared on a Russian stage after an absence of sixty-one years.

I can recommend Schonberg's book to any reader who agrees with this assessment of the pianist, and there are pleasures here even for the rest of us. Schonberg, the chief classical music critic for *The New York Times* from 1960 to 1980 and a "gray eminence" since, is an engaging writer who combines judicial authority with the common touch. After a lifetime of listening to and writing about music, he is still passionate about the art; he particularly loves the piano, and writes lyrically about its practitioners. He certainly has a flair for drama. (Schonberg accords Horowitz's several retirements from the stage roughly the same importance that Ingmar Bergman accorded the silence of God.)

And so this book is vintage Schonberg: informed, informal, inviting, and digressive; full of anecdotes, asides, and enthusiasm. Still, there is something rather sad about it all. Schonberg's account is suffused with the feeling that a Golden Age is gone for good, and nothing can ever take its place, and only a few old-timers know enough to care. He seems to take little pleasure in the pianism of such superb young artists as Peter Serkin, Andras Schiff, and Richard Goode, who, one may hope, have some great years—some great decades—ahead of them. No, Schonberg is a nostalgist. He writes with the elegiac tone of a baseball fan still mourning the day that the Dodgers left Brooklyn.

The sports analogy is apt, for Schonberg has a penchant for musical athletes, as anybody who has read his recently updated *The Great Pianists* already knows. That entertaining volume has a Jovian mien, a stern sense of laying down absolute standards, but in fact it is a deeply subjective and rather eccentric book. Schonberg has his own particular, and sometimes peculiar, standards of pianistic greatness. Technical command is important above all else, or so it sometimes seems. He thrills to thundering octaves, cascading scales, demonic furies, flamboyant personalities.

Schonberg's aesthetic might be described as a never-say-die nineteenth-century pianistic machismo. (How fast can you play "La Campanella," kid?) Thus the extraordinarily tender pianist Miecsyslaw Horszowski, who was still recording and concertizing at the age of 99, is dismissed with a quick pleasantry, almost in passing, as are such patrician artists as Edwin Fischer, Wilhelm Kempff, and Yves Nat. Schonberg's discussion of reserved and analytical pianists such as Artur Schnabel and Maurizio Pollini has a detached, dutiful quality; one senses that he can hardly wait to get back to some bug-eyed, monk-robed, golden-maned nineteenth-century "titan" gazing heavenward, playing (and playing at being) Liszt.

Horowitz, it will be immediately clear to the reader of this book, was, for Schonberg, a titan among titans. "All artists pursue a Grail, that all-but-impossible quest for those rare moments when the light of the music transfigures them to the point where performer, composer, and audience are one," he writes. "Vladimir Horowitz consistently achieved that goal, and that is why he was the dominant figure in piano playing for the last half of the twentieth century." The critic was far from alone in his estimation. Indeed, for several generations of music lovers, Horowitz was *the* pianist, in the same way that Heifetz was *the* violinist, Toscanini (and later Bernstein) *the* conductor, and Caruso (and later Pavarotti) *the* tenor.

Horowitz had a kind of sacerdotal importance. He became a secular icon (*The Last Romantic* and *Horowitz the Poet* were the titles of two late recordings). He was paid more than any other classical artist of his time, and he attracted many thousands of people who had no interest in concert music but were fascinated by the dapper man in the bow tie with the impeccable control of dynamics and the articulation that ranged from an ethereal pianissimo to a veritable Niagara of sound. During the last thirty-five years of his life, despite ticket prices that eventually climbed to $75 a head, Horowitz never played to an unsold seat.

Schonberg's advocacy has provoked me to dig out some of my old Horowitz recordings and to investigate several others I had passed up. And from this orgy of pianism, on vinyl and compact disc, I have emerged, dismayed and astonished, wondering, in good faith, what on earth all the fuss was about.

Let's start with a rule of thumb: in general, the cheaper the music Horowitz took on, the better the performance. I cannot imagine that anybody soon will give us a more visceral, muscular, glittering, and exciting piano transcription of "Stars and Stripes Forever"; and Horowitz's version of his own "Carmen" *Fantasy* is, of course, definitive. Nobody has ever brought such superbly controlled fury, such all-but-superhuman velocity, to the sonatas of Prokofiev and Kabalevsky. And Horowitz's performances of some ambitious pieces by Scriabin and Liszt are characterized by a prismatic sense of color, combined with a "Hound of Heaven" urgency, that suits their fuzzy, "daemonic" metaphysics perfectly.

But is this really what we want from a pianist? It is, for Schonberg. He decries what he calls "a cultural snobbism that swept the international musical life":

> One heard such comments about any musician as, "Oh, yes, it's all very well that he plays Rachmaninoff, Liszt, and Scriabin. But how can we tell how good a musician he is until we hear him play Mozart and Schubert?" Anybody who timidly suggested the reverse—"Oh, yes, he plays Mozart and Schubert very well, but how good a musician can we tell he is until we hear him play Rachmaninoff, Liszt, and Scriabin?"—would have been branded a musical yahoo.

This strikes me as absurd, especially coming as it does from the man who held the most august position in music criticism for twenty years, who was the last *Times* chief critic to have any really significant impact on American musical life. Nobody would brand Schonberg a yahoo, and yet it is obvious to me that there are vast qualitative differences between Mozart and Schubert on the one hand and Rachmaninoff, Liszt, and Scriabin on the other. ("Oh, yes, he plays Hamlet very well, but how good an actor can we tell he is until he does some *magic tricks*?")

For the sake of expediency, however, let us agree that Horowitz played Rachmaninoff, Liszt, and Scriabin very well, Mozart and Schubert quite a bit less

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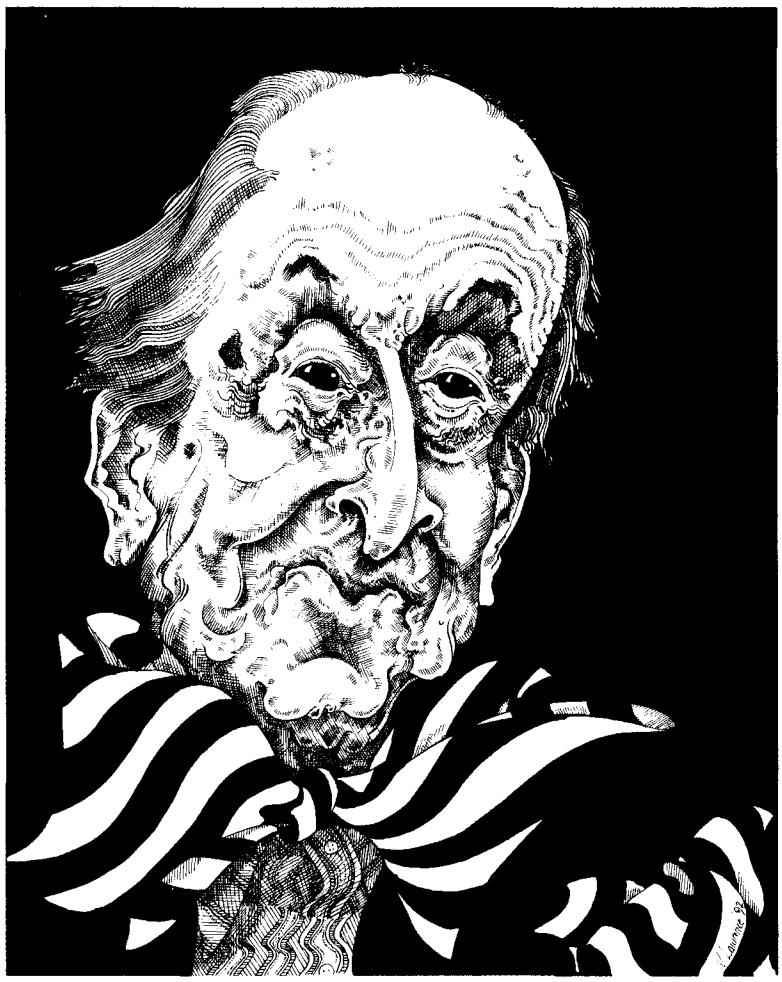
well (though Schonberg mounts a spirited defense of the mannered, mincing Mozart recordings that the pianist made for Deutsche Grammophon a year or two before his death), and move on to the center of the repertory, to the works of Beethoven, Chopin, and Schumann. How does Horowitz fare here? To this taste, pretty poorly. In general, his performances of the standard Romantic repertory strike me as flashy, brittle, and arbitrary, an unreflective, idiosyncratic r. ɣture of fussy, impedimental detail and an aggressive charge toward the goal line. The compositions all too often turn into "vehicles," the musical equivalent of weights to lift or hurdles to leap.

Horowitz was intent on proving, first and foremost, that he could do anything with a piano. He usually succeeded, but not without reminding his listeners that virtuosity for the sake of pure, unadorned virtuosity is a lesser kind of artistic success. He was almost never able to yoke his acrobatics into a linear statement, nor did he seem to care. For example, he recorded the first Ballade of Chopin commercially four times. I've heard three of these recordings, and each one of them is radically different. Schonberg approvingly notes that Horowitz never played a piece the same way twice. But music is not like Heraclitus's river: there is a text, and there must be a coherent interpretation, or a coherent series of interpretations. No good composer, after all, builds according to passing whim, and it is frivolous for an interpreter to play that way. Of course, there are similarities in those recordings of Chopin, but t' ey confirm one's worst suspicions: they all contain, moment for moment, bursts of spectacular pianism, and they are all, judged as a totality, incoherent.

One suspects that Horowitz had no sense of proportion. He bangs his way through the beginning of Chopin's B-flat minor sonata and the B-minor scherzo with the same steely tone and get-out-of-my-way manner that he employs for Prokofiev. The result is clatter. Sometimes it is magnificent clatter—you and I couldn't do it, even if we practiced until 2001—but it is clatter all the same. Conversely, when Horowitz conjures up a "pretty" sound, it is often ravishing—floating, resonant, bell-like. And yet it seems studied, calculated, a conscious "turning-on" of the charm, like the impersonal self-assurance of a gorgeous starlet showing her teeth. Thus the ultimate effect even of his delicate passages can be repellent. It was one of Horowitz's favorite tricks (and it usually sounded like a trick) to play very loudly and then immediately taper to near-inaudibility while retaining full, immaculate clarity. These sudden diminuendos—the musical equivalent of stopping on a dime—are sometimes brilliantly effective, but when they are not precious, they are pure Chico Marx.



VLADIMIR HOROWITZ BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Horowitz was probably at his most convincing in sets of miniatures, where he could hit and miss, lose listeners with a maladroit conception of one piece, win them back with a bejeweled tone or a torrent of octaves in the next. When a big masterpiece falls into his hands—the more complicated Beethoven sonatas, the greater Chopin, the Schumann *Fantasy*—he is, interpretively speaking, absolutely at sea. He simply cannot turn these works into anything more than a succession of highs, a motley of singular "events."

According to the press, there were almost as many "new Horowitzes" as there were "new Nixons." He was said to have "deepened" in the years between the beginning of his sabbatical in 1953 and his return to the stage in 1965. I don't hear it. He recorded the Schubert B-flat sonata twice, in 1953 and in 1986, and both renditions are remarkable mainly for their emphasis on all the wrong details. Time and again, our attention is drawn not to the music, but to what the pianist is doing *to* the music (meaningless accellerandos, swooning resolutions).

And so it goes, throughout the Horowitz discography. To accept this pianist as "the last Romantic" one must accept a certain stereotype of Romanticism, and buy the premise that Romanticism in music is synonymous with display, sound effects, and random caprice. But it isn't, as any number of pianists before and after Horowitz well knew—pianists as diverse, stylistically and chronologically, as Rachmaninoff, Friedman, Friedberg, Freund, Rubinstein, Kapell, Gieseking, Cortot, Curzon, Richter, Katin, Serkin *père et fils*, Pollini, and Argerich, just to start the list. It is possible to play with abundant freedom and fantasy and still retain structural integrity. In short, Horowitz was not the last Romantic. He was the vulgar Romantic.

The best Horowitz recordings? There are some good ones: Samuel Barber's piano sonata, written for Horowitz, and dashed off with a glittering, glassy grandeur that has never been equaled; some wonderfully epical performances of Scarlatti (for those who don't mind hearing baroque harpsichord pieces played on the dread, decidedly inauthentic modern Steinway); his early rendition of the Liszt sonata in B-minor and, if you can stomach some of the most pretentious music ever written, the same composer's "Funerailles"; the charming

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A totally new concept. The concept of "land for peace" is a totally new one in the history of the world. It was formulated for one specific purpose only, namely to persuade and pressure Israel to give up territories that it has administered since the Six-Day War of 1967. By its victory in that war, Israel wound up in possession of these territories. Contrary to what many are led to believe, the "West Bank," the focus of today's attention, had never been part of any Arab country. It was part of Palestine, a territorial unit that, by the Mandate of the League of Nations and in line with the Balfour Declaration, had been designated as a national home for the Jewish people.

"A new idea, perhaps even a good one...but it needs to work both ways to be valid and effective."

Thus, while the concept of "land for peace" is a brand-new one, the concept that to the victor belong the spoils is as old as history itself. Our own country, of course, following its Manifest Destiny, has benefited greatly and has consolidated its territory by applying this motto. But Israel followed a different path. From the day of victory in 1967, it waited for an offer of peace from the Arabs. But that offer never came.

Should be 2-way street. In 1977, President Sadat of Egypt traveled to Jerusalem and presented a peace plan to the Israeli government. The Israelis eagerly embraced his suggestion. In exchange for peace and normalization of relations with its neighbor, Israel returned to Egypt the vast Sinai peninsula, together with the city of Yamit; some of the most advanced military installations in the world; the port and naval installation of Sharm-el-Sheik, and the oil fields that Israel had developed. And, of course, Israel also gave up the natural buffer against aggression that the Suez Canal and the strategic depth of the Sinai itself provided. It was a first in history. Never before in the chronicle of mankind had the victor returned conquered territory to the vanquished in order to attain peace.

One would expect that the concept of "land for peace" would work both ways. After all, should not the Arabs also make some territorial sacrifices for peace? Unfortunately, that is not the case. Every inch of land held by the Arabs is considered "holy Arab soil" and its possession by the "infidels" (Christians or Jews) is inadmissible. No compromise, no concession is ever possible.

Conflict is with Arab nations. The "land for peace" formulation is now applied mostly to Judea and Samaria (the "West Bank"), the Gaza region and the Golan Heights. Israel's foes, but also some of its friends, urge Israel to yield these regions to the Arabs, in exchange for "peace." But no peace will come about by Israel's giving up these areas of vital strategic importance to those who are its sworn enemies and who have declared over and over again that they wish to use these lands as their launching pad for the final attempt at the destruction of Israel. The conflict in the area is not only between Israel and the Palestinians. It is first of all between Israel and the Arab nations. With the single exception of Egypt, virtually all of them are still in a state of war with Israel.

To none of the Arab countries has the possibility ever occurred of *their* trading land for peace, for instance yielding the "West Bank", Gaza and the Golan Heights to Israel for the sake of peace. There isn't even a gesture of accommodation, such as a lifting of the Arab economic boycott against Israel, an apology for the odious slander that Zionism is Racism, or a discontinuation of the yearly charade in the United Nations, in which the Arab states attempt to expel Israel from that body. For the victor to yield land for peace to the vanquished is a new idea—who knows, it might even be a good one. But it surely would have to work both ways in order to be valid and effective.

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Clementi album, recorded at his Manhattan home in the mid-1950s. The last recording is remarkable in Horowitz's output for the extent to which the pianist bowed to the essential modesty of this music and belabored it not at all, playing instead with love and affinity.

The best book on Horowitz? This new one, I think. Glenn Plaskin's dishy biography, which appeared in 1983, contains a great deal of information, but it does not command the authority that rings through Schonberg's volume. And David Dubal's *Evenings with Horowitz: A Personal Portrait* is a malicious and reprehensible "bread-and-butter note" from a member of the Horowitz inner circle who, after the pianist was safely entombed, betrayed his trust by publishing dinner chatter, while casting himself as the book's beleaguered, Byronic hero. Reading Dubal, one is reminded again and again of a pampered, quivering lap dog who yaps and snaps the moment the petting stops. Schonberg, by contrast, has studied Horowitz's work for more than half a century, and even if one does not happen to share his admiration, this is a useful summary. And Schonberg acknowledges points of view other than his own, though he implies, in crankier moments, that they are part of some whippersnapper "plot."

In fact, there were dissenting voices all along. B.H. Haggin long ago deplored what he called the pianist's "fussing with tone and phrase-color with no regard for the character and requirements of the music." Virgil Thomson described Horowitz as a "master of distortion and exaggeration," and added that he was "out to wow the public, and wow it he does. He makes a false accent or phrasing anywhere he thinks it will attract attention." And Michael Steinberg, in one of the few passages of censure in the entire *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, concluded that "Horowitz illustrates that an astounding instrumental gift carries no guarantee about musical understanding."

And then there was the note that Rachmaninoff wrote to the young Horowitz in 1928, after hearing him play the first Tchaikovsky concerto. "Mr. Horowitz," it began, "you have won the octaves race. Nobody has ever played them like you. But I will not congratulate you, because it was not musical." It still isn't.

TIM PAGE is the chief classical music critic for *Newsday* and the author most recently of *William Kapell* (International Piano Archives) and *Music from the Road: Views and Reviews, 1978-1992* (Oxford University Press).

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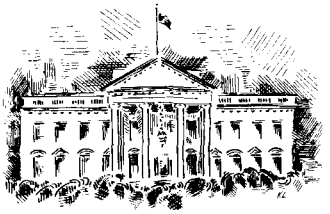
WASHINGTON DIARIST

O.K., you win

CREDIT BELONGS TO GEORGE Allen, the great coach of the Washington Redskins, for pithily capturing the Washington ethic in all its cruel, unsentimental glory. "Winning is life," Allen said. "Losing is death." Allen was talking about football, but never mind. The Allen maxim applies to President Bush. He's dead. True, he still has some power. He'll be president until January 20, and after that, as a former president, still able to muster attention. Sorry, this isn't enough. It's not true that in Washington power necessarily begets respect. You've got to produce victories, show tangible signs of success, or at least flaunt your power shamelessly. Bush falls short on all counts. And there's another test of status here: the press. Contrary to the myth that reporters have concocted about themselves, the press rarely takes on the high and mighty in Washington. Instead, its specialty is slamming the defeated, the weak, the vulnerable. The rule of thumb is: kick 'em when they're down. Once Bush became a disgraced one-termer, the pummeling intensified. Half-serious lists of what's "in" and "out" appeared instantly. As you might guess, everything even remotely connected with George Bush is "out," including me.

SHORTLY BEFORE THE ELECTION, I was described in *The Washington Post* as "a frequent Bush defender." At first I was ready to quibble with the word "frequent." I thought "sometimes" or "occasional" would be more accurate—or maybe "about the only Bush defender." But if "frequent" consists of siding with Bush more than practically anyone else in Washington journalism, it fits. So here's my final defense. Bush is not a "failed" president. He did two things right, two very, very big things. He coolly abetted the collapse of the Soviet Union and communism. This was a tricky process. You had to know when to prod, when to stay your hand, when to shut your mouth. Bush knew. He also produced and directed Desert Storm, which was close to an unmitigated success. Yes, I'm aware Saddam wasn't ousted. Yes, I would have preferred the president to act sooner in defense of the Kurds and Shiites in Iraq. Yes, I've heard of Iraqgate. But Saddam is not a menace now. He's a nuisance. And the Kurds and Shiites finally have a measure of protection. By emasculating the biggest bully on the block, Bush spared Iraq's neighbors and the world years of intimidation, nuclear terror, and bloodshed. Among other things, the security of Israel was enormously enhanced. Bush made the Middle East peace talks possible. And he demonstrated that the United States, as the world's lone superpower, is not a pitiful, helpless giant. Iraqgate? A trivial matter ballooned to scandal proportions by partisan opponents and conspiracy-mongers. In short, Bush made the world an easier place for President Clinton to deal with.



I DON'T HAVE TO worry about becoming "a frequent Clinton defender." Others, many, many others, have a prior claim on that. No one denies the press tilted toward Clinton during the campaign and was hostile to Bush. Egregious as that was, there was something worse. The press was unashamedly pro-Clinton. I think an important line was crossed. In pre-1992 days, journalists insisted they didn't really favor one candidate over another. This wasn't true—they usually promoted the more liberal candidate—but to maintain the pretense of fairness, they had to restrain themselves. This year the restraint was gone. Instead of denials, reporters offered explanations for their cheerleading for Clinton. A new president would be a better story to cover in Washington. They were compensating for having pounded Clinton too hard last winter over Gennifer Flowers and the draft (in truth, they'd scarcely pounded at all). Bush deserved rougher treatment. And so on. I hope campaign coverage isn't permanently changed the way Washington was when lobbyists came out of the closet a decade or two ago. For years they insisted they were merely lawyers. Their grubbing for influence and money was muted. Now, as self-proclaimed lobbyists, they've turned Washington into a big casino.

CLINTON'S ELECTION MAY NOT mark the start of a meaningful new era in American government, but it does alter one issue, abortion. This decisive turn has gone largely unnoticed by the media. Strange. For twenty years, pro-lifers struggled to overturn *Roe* v. *Wade* and ban or curb abortions. Until last summer, when the Supreme Court reaffirmed *Roe*, momentum seemed to be on their side. Suddenly, with Clinton in the White House, the fight is lost, or won if you're pro-choice. Clinton, assuming he meant what he said in the campaign, will sign the Freedom of Choice Act, blocking states from enacting any restrictions on abortion. He'll invoke a litmus test for all judicial appointments, from the Supreme Court on down. They'll be required to endorse *Roe*. And he'll sign executive orders allowing fetal tissue research, lifting the ban on the French abortion pill, permitting abortions at military hospitals, and ending the so-called gag rule at federally funded family planning clinics. I don't cite any of this happily. I think the election was a catastrophe for unborn children. I don't know where the pro-life movement turns now, except to more civil disobedience. That tactic won't work, however, unless sympathetically covered by the press. Fat chance. Clinton says he's pro-choice, not pro-abortion, and wants to reduce the number of abortions (1.6 million annually) in this country. I take him at his word. Start reducing.

ENOUGH OF THE election. Let's look at Hollywood, where history is turned into movies with remarkable speed. But not in the case of *Stalin*, the new HBO movie staring Robert Duvall. It's thirty, forty, fifty years too late. The producers of *Stalin* are like those cynical contributors to political campaigns who donate after the election and direct their money to the winners. Communism is dead, the Soviet Union is gone, and Hollywood is cranking up for a full-throated anti-Communist crusade. This may be better late than never, but it's not much. The movie concentrates on Stalin's life inside the Kremlin, not the destruction and death of millions he caused outside. Still, it's an improvement. Communism was the greatest evil of the second half of the twentieth century, but Hollywood was chiefly devoted to attacking anti-communism. This strikes me as morally perverse. The Hollywood specialty was the exposé of the excesses of anti-communism—in Chile, El Salvador, Indonesia, Washington, wherever, even in Hollywood itself. I'm not a big moviegoer, but without any trouble at all I can come up with a long list of anti-anti-Communist movies. I admit some of them were entertaining. I liked *Dr. Strangelove* and *Seven Days in May* and *The Year of Living Dangerously*. As for anti-Communist movies, the list is short. The best was *Hanoi Hilton*, directed by my friend Lionel Chetwynd. *The Hunt for Red October* wasn't bad. The only memorable anti-Communist hero in movies of the last thirty, forty years was Rambo, a cartoon character. And his main gripe was not with Communists, but with Pentagon bureaucrats back in Washington.

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